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133 alkaline plains and approaches the marshy lakes that are abundantly
137 present in the rainy season and frequently absent in the dry period. The acacia and the eucalyptus are familiar and frequent in both the low and the high lands, and spear grass covers the land in dense growths during the months of rain.

136 The animals, with certain minor variations, are the usual marsupials and monotremes found in Australia, with the bat and wild domestic dog the only mammalia living in the region. Nature is bountiful with
● [262] many varieties of birds, fish, and other animals; but vegetable foods, although plentiful, are limited in variety.

144 The Murngin people belong to the aboriginal Australoid race found throughout Australia—not Mongoloid, Negroid, or Caucasian, but a variant group which seems to be a blend of many of the features of the
[197] white and black races.[2] Their language is one of the Australo-Dravidian linguistic group. They belong to a Stone Age culture; were they placed
105 in our own chronology, their technological development would fall somewhere between the Old and the New Stone Ages.

The Murngin civilization is a simple Australian culture with a small hunting and gathering population which lives off the sea and the land. The natural environment which surrounds it and drastically affects native behavior consists of *two changes which make up the yearly cycle*; one of these is extremely rainy, producing a period of scarcity, and the other a dry period when there is an abundance of food. The technology can be described briefly as the adaptive mechanisms of the general society to these two parts of the cycle of nature.

614 The social organization must be given in a more detailed description.
823 The fundamental basis of the society is an elaborate kinship[3] system in which everyone is related to everyone else. This kinship system is organized into more general units which are patrilineal,[3] exogamic[3] clans[3] which have local territories that were "given to them by the totems."[3] All parts of the clan land have totemic references. Each clan has multiple totems; all clans have at least one, possibly more, sacred water holes where live the high totems, the totemic ancestors, the ancestral dead, and the totemic spirits of the unborn. The names of all clansmen have totemic significance, and the whole general totemic pattern is related to the clan.

[101] [2] See Appendix VII.—The term "Black" in the title of this book, *A Black Civilization*, is not to be interpreted as describing these people as purely Negroid. The term refers, rather, to their popular name, "Australian Blacks," and to the name they accept for themselves from the Australian whites, "Blackfellows."

[3] See Glossary of Technical Terms, page 566.

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Brothers look to their sisters to supply them with wakus for their daughters to marry. A waku's importance to a man is no less than that of a son. A brother always makes presents to his sister for her son, as well as to her husband.

A brother, but no sister, may eat a youth's kill of kangaroo, emu, et cetera, until the youth's wife has had a child. A sister is supposed to help carry the ruddled bones of the first kangaroo or emu killed by her brother, just as she helps carry her dead brother's bones.

A brother and father always know and keep the tabooed names of a girl. No woman knows her ceremonial name.

There are two sets of behavior in the relationship of a brother and sister that must be treated together (see pages 110-112 for an interpretation of the Wakinu and Mirriri customs). First, she is called wakinu by all her brothers. In its primary sense, wakinu means a person without kin, and secondarily "worthless" or, more expressively, "rubbish." Bamapama, the trickster hero, a much-loved scoundrel who lived in the olden days and broke all laws, is always wakinu after some particularly fantastic escapade of his has been retold. Wakinu is used during a fight as an appropriate term against one's enemies. Secondly, no brother can hear his sister sworn at or hear obscene speech in her presence, such as is very common otherwise. Ordinarily, when a man's anger rises, he immediately bursts into an almost pyrotechnical display of abuse, most of it centering around sex, breaking of incest taboos, peculiarities of the genitalia, irregularities in the sexual act between men and women, et cetera. The aversion to hearing or using such profanity in front of a sister is called "mirriri" (ear-thing). It really means, "My ear can't hear obscenity in front of my sister." An older man said, "It is just the same as if I had been hit on the head with a club when I hear that." Another said, "My heart jumps and stops, jumps and stops, when I hear that mirriri."

Malambunu had come home and found his food unprepared by his wife, Dangra. A quarrel resulted in which he called her matamakmi (incestuous). She did not swear at him. A near-clan brother of Dangra, Badunga, heard the swearing and became very angry. He gathered a bundle of spears, hooked them one by one to his spear-thrower, and threw them at a large number of the women in the native camp, including Dangra. An investigation showed that every one of the women at whom he threw was called yeppa by him.

Balli, an adolescent girl, called her own mother dalardumaru (big vagina).

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593 602 father; frequently, because of the opportunities of competition for women among distant groups, there are actual animosity and warfare. Since older and younger brothers are clearly differentiated by separate terms, wawa and yukiyuko, and have a definitely regulated behavior toward each other, the relationship of bapa and his sons must be considered from this point of view. Does a father distinguish between older and younger sons, even though there is no term to express these functional differences and all sons are gatu? The answer is decidedly in the affirmative, as will be seen below from the chronologically ordered account of the normal relationship from the period before birth of the son until the death of both father and son.

262 When a "married" man has no children, he must observe a number of food taboos until a wife announces pregnancy. He cannot eat, whether he or another kills or gathers them, porcupine, emu eggs, snake eggs, iguana eggs, turkey eggs, crayfish, large barrimundi, or [851] crabs, until he acquires the right by old age. A child's birth removes all these taboos, but the child must be his, not a brother's.

787 842 843 The ideas surrounding birth give the father a prominent part in the procedure. The various spirits of the unborn and the dead live with the clan totems in the clan wells. As stated, a father dreams that the child comes to him, asking where it can find its mother, and enters the mother's vagina. The next day the man informs the wife that she is going to have a child, or, if it is his first child, to test the value of his dream he may keep it a secret. The natives believe these dreams are always true since a wife usually tells her husband a few days later that she has felt the movements of a child within her. The husband knows then that his dream is true. He sharpens his spears, rewraps his [777] spear-thrower, and prepares to go hunting, for he knows that he will be successful because his child has come from the totemic spirits within the water, bringing good luck with it. He kills an abundance [262] of game and brings it home. A slight ceremony takes place, after which he may eat all food, for, according to Murngin thought his wife having conceived, he is now a father. This removal of taboos on his diet furnishes one of the reasons for a man's eagerness to have children.

787 842 A child comes from its father's well on the father's clan territory, for clan descent is patrilineal. Sometimes the father may be in another part of the country and may dream that the child came from the well of the local clan. Then it would inherit not only its own clan's totems, but also those of the other, yet it would be a member only of his father's clan. The second water hole must belong to the same moiety

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as his father's; for a father to be Yiritja and the son Dua would be impossible. No man has ever dreamed such an unorthodox concept—either because the moiety idea is such a complete part of Murngin thought that their dreams conform to it, or the men who have such dreams place no importance upon them and forget or suppress them. At all events, a child, male or female, ordinarily inherits only its father's clan and totems, and occasionally inherits in addition totems of another clan. Further, the dream clearly demonstrates a sociological connection between father and child even before birth. The author has recorded no birth without the dream.

Sometimes a man steals another's wife while she is pregnant. The child when born is considered a member of the new man's clan; when he becomes older he usually returns to his own father's clan and identifies himself with it, although he may have strong attachments to his second father's group.

All this indicates that patrilineal inheritance is from the actual father and his group, and not from a different clan, though of the same moiety; it also shows the importance of the actual father in Murngin thought.

Several informants volunteered that a man must abstain from the tabooed foods until he has had a child, because the release from the taboo made him quiet and settled so he would stop running after other women and would stay in one place to take care of his wives, children, and parents-in-law. The social implications of this are very important. By becoming a father he has finally become a husband; he has extended his patrilineal line descendingly and thereby strengthened his own family; and, third, he has, also through this child, strengthened his relationship to his wife's brother, to gawel (father-in-law), mokul (mother-in-law), and marelker (mother-in-law's brother). For, instead of only one direct reciprocal relation, he now has an additional indirect reciprocation with each. His son (or daughter) calls his wife's brothers "gawel" and has a strong bond of mutual aid and obligation with them. His son calls ego's mother-in-law "mari" and has a strong untabooed attachment to her; and to marelker the son also has a strong emotional relationship because ego's marelker is mari to the son. The creation of these social personalities shows the enormous addition to one's kinship personality through the birth of a son, who strengthens ego's position, adding to his security within the clan, the tribe, and with other tribes.

On the other hand, the birth of a daughter is of equal importance.

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595 the son. A dué likes many wives because he tires of cohabiting with
554 one and because such multiplicity creates more sons and daughters, so that he will have more waku, dué, and galle, with stronger bonds between him and them.

513 When in camp a woman sleeps with her back to her husband. If
833 intercourse takes place it is in this position so that no one can be aware of what they are doing.

843 A dué and galle never copulate during a woman's pregnancy, lest the child be born dead or die early in infancy, the mother's milk being
824 soured by her husband's semen. If a child is born dead the parents are blamed. If a baby dies, the brother and father of the mother criticize
620 their actions throughout the camp in loud voices for her and other members of the tribe to hear. Since sexual intercourse has usually occurred between dué and galle after what they feel should have been the regulated time, they say nothing and do not resent the criticism.

846 After a child is born the woman and man wait several days before resuming sexual relations. The wife goes through a short ceremony that is both therapeutic and ritualistic. She enters the bush with a female relative such as momo, mari, or mokul bapa, and places some stones on a fire. When these are hot she squats over the fire and the other woman throws water over the stones. The steam is supposed to heal, cleanse and close her uterus and make it small again.

846 A woman during this period sleeps facing her husband, who does
833 not try to touch her but waits until she turns from him and starts making casual conversation. He realizes then that she wants him. After his first intercourse with his wife following the birth of a child, the husband always rises early and bathes himself. If he did not, he would look like an animal to the other men and feel ashamed before them.[11]

593 A woman gathers the small game, nuts, bulbs, yams, and other
222 vegetable food, as well as all shell food for the family. A man always has first right to the food brought by her. She and her daughters have
462 eaten all they wish while gathering it. A wife usually cooks the food
262 she has brought for her husband. A large part of a family's larder is contributed by the wife. Big game is supplied by the men, who also bring in fish and large sea animals such as turtle, porpoise, dugong and shark.

[11] There is considerable evidence that there is a comparatively strong taboo on sexual relations between man and wife after the man has seen a totem the first time. It is said that the ceremonial leader for the totem would be so angry that he would attempt to spear the culprit.

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561 591 camp there is a definite recognition of age. They are seen no longer as babies but as growing boys; but if the young men stay in the men's camp after they grow a beard it is then not so much a matter of age grading as such as it is a single status that is being recognized, since they are now at the proper age for marriage. It is marriage which takes males out of the men's camp and puts them in the general camp. The young men's camp recognizes sex, marriage status, and age. A large 561 591 number of men who are past the adolescence ceremonies, that is, the totem-seeing rituals, continue in the young men's camp because they 885 494 have yet to obtain a wife. Further proof that marriage is a final criterion of status is found in the fact that men who travel without their women stay in the men's camp, since at that moment they are single men and not to be classed as married. The only deviation from this of which the writer knows is that occasionally a man will stay in a brother's camp if visiting outside his own clan's territory.

561 867 869 887 In the young men's camp the oldest man takes charge and reprimands all wrongdoers with the assistance of the near relatives of the offending youths. He also gives them instructions and advice about the totemic emblems when they have seen them, and informs them on the tribal mores, tradition, and mythology. At times there may be more than one old man in the men's camp. The division of authority and power is then based on the personalities of the old men, the more dominant achieving a greater control over the boys. Such authority is more explicit here than one finds it in almost any other part of the Murngin behavior, with the possible exception of the ceremonial ritual when the leader decides when and where it shall be held.

224 His near female relatives carry the bones of the animal when a boy makes his first kill. It is supposed to be done for all the animals a male kills until he has a baby. The bones of the animal or bird are painted with red ocher. If a boy kills a turkey or other large bird, he does not pick it up but leaves it, returns to the camp and tells some old man. He does not say the name of the turkey but calls out "Ka-ok," the sound the turkey makes, to tell his listener what has happened so that he can pick it up. If a young man finds a porcupine (echidna), he will not kill it but goes to tell an old man of his find. [262] If it is killed, he cannot eat it. After they have been carried by the women, the bones of the larger animals are put in a basket made by the mother for this purpose. The basket is placed near the camp and no one touches it, for it would anger the relatives of the boy and a fight would follow.

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food, yams, and other vegetable food. This is generally done communally by the women in the bush where the food is gathered, but women also cook within the camp. Men cook the larger animals, prepare the stone ovens, place the large chunks of meat in the fire, and tend the food to see that it is being properly treated.—It is considered as within the bounds of propriety for the man to move about the camp at night in the way he pleases, but "all women must stay in the house when the men are at home."

Definite taboos are removed from a man's diet when he becomes a father (see pages 68 and 69), as from a woman's when she becomes a mother or too old to have children. After the birth of the child, the parents paint themselves. He takes the bones of his first kills from the basket which had been made by his mother and carries them some distance from the camp. Here a hollow log is cut in the same shape as that for the bones of a dead man, and the bones are put inside it. The "coffin" is put up in the camp in the same manner as a dead man's carved hollow-log coffin. The people who have had meat from the boy while he could not eat put presents of food in his clan's symbolic well, made while he was painting himself.—If a man had eaten of the tabooed foods while in the lower age grades, it is supposed he would become weak and unable to throw a spear in a spear fight; in a makarata it is likely that a spear will go into his leg, it will swell up and his flesh grow rotten while the spear is in his leg. This will also happen if the bones of the animals killed are not put in a hollow log and treated properly. If a young childless man ate porcupine, he would not grow up because "porcupine is a short one."

The reason given for the release from the taboos (see also page 69) is that the young man "becomes more quiet then and does not run about everywhere after other women. He stays in one place and looks out for his own galle and children." In reality, his social personality has grown so that his actual relatives include descending relatives as well as ascending. The birth of a child heightens his emotional ties with his relatives who have children who will marry his children and, in all, puts him in a different status, which is expressed by the release of the food taboos. All this underlying thought agrees with the Murngin idea that marriage does not become complete and permanent until a child is born.

Age grading in Murngin societies is highly ritualistic and controls a man's religious life far more than it does his ordinary daily existence. A man's religious knowledge and his understanding of the sacred

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Everything that can be digested is eaten, but nothing is done with bone or shell. When the Malays were trading with the natives the shell was exchanged for Malay products.

A man who goes turtle harpooning usually takes three or four men with him to paddle the canoe. He is considered the leader, but helps with the paddling while looking for turtle. The canoe goes beyond the breakwater out into the open sea. Along the sand beaches a goodly number of these animals can be found swimming in to shore to lay their eggs. When the head of the turtle is sighted all the oarsmen paddle as rapidly and silently as possible. They hold their heads and bodies down as low as possible so as not to be seen. When the canoe gets within range the harpooner articulates his harpoon to his spear-thrower and aims it just back of the turtle's head. If he strikes, the turtle dives, taking the head of the harpoon with the rope following to the sea bottom. The rope is held on to if it is possible; if not, it is picked up again when the animal rises sufficiently to bring the rope within reach. When the turtle comes up for air he is sometimes speared again, once more goes down, and the rope again held. When the rope becomes slack and it is felt that the turtle has tired itself, a man jumps overboard, puts his hands at the side of the turtle and attempts to turn it on its back. When he has it in this position the other men pull up on the rope. They catch hold of the turtle's legs and pull it on board. It is then hit on the head with a club. This has to be done carefully because a bite in a vulnerable spot would probably result in death.

Eggs of three species of turtle are eaten. Buckingham and Arnhem Bays are supposed to furnish the largest supply. Nests of crocodiles are sought out along the swampy river banks and their eggs gathered and eaten.

Sharks and crocodiles are harpooned, but usually speared. The backbone of a crocodile is chopped in back of the hind legs to sever the tail and to prevent its striking the hunter. When a sting ray is speared its tail is held in the mouth to prevent the fish's barbed prong from striking the spearsman while he is killing it.

The shallow rock bottoms along the seacoast or the white sand bottoms of the long low beaches where the water is knee to waist deep are the favorite fishing places. A spear-thrower is nearly always used with a fish spear.

Poison is sometimes used to stupefy fish, which then float in the water until gathered in. Dangi, an unidentified vegetable product, is

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The old men shake their heads affirmatively and click their tongues: "You have seen the dead man's soul all right."

"Yes, he came to me yesterday and went inside my body. Last night when I dreamed he told me to go out in the bush. Today I went out and he came to me. I knew it was the soul of the dead man. When I sneaked up closer to make sure, I saw a small kangaroo lying there. I put sweat from my armpit on my throwing arm and killed him. The kangaroo grew as big as you see it now."

One of the old men replies to this effect: "We knew straightaway that this had happened because it always happens like this. It happened to most of us when we were young men."

No woman is allowed to eat any of the flesh of such an animal; only the old men, the killer, and his immediate male relatives partake of it. When a member of the Yiritija moiety is killed the killer sees an animal of that same moiety; after a Dua man is slain an animal from that moiety is later seen and killed.

Often the spirit of a man who has been killed appears in the guise of a crow, cockatoo, or other bird, and circles around and around the head of the slayer, or at times a honeybee may appear. When such creatures take the place of the spirit they always belong to the moiety of the dead man, and their function is to lead the slayer to the larger animal just as the soul does when it appears. A man only acquires the soul of the dead in a night fight, never in the daytime, because the one who has been killed sees the killer and his anger prevents the soul from entering the body of his killer.

When Mahkarolla had grown to early maturity he went with an expedition to an enemy clan and there killed one of its members in a night attack. He had been home but a few days when he noticed a crow flying back and forth very near his head. It seemed to have selected him from all the other men of the camp for its attention. The crow is Dua; the dead man's clan was Dua.

"This crow flew a little way from my camp. I looked and I saw a Dua honeybee flying away. I followed, for I thought it might be that I would find the honeybee's hive. I went into the bush and watched that honeybee. I went and went and I saw that tree, and up in the top of the tree that same crow was sitting. I knew what this meant. I took sweat from under my arm and rubbed it on my right arm. I looked up now and I could not see that crow any more. I think that he has changed into a honeybee. The tree was a small one when I first looked. Now it had become very large. I took my axe and cut it down. Most bees' hives are only in a part of a hollow log, but the honey in this one went from the ground all the way

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754 anything that a man or woman has been eating are carefully picked up and hidden.

754 The magicians are believed to take the excrement at times and place it in a fire where there are hot stones which are supposed to make 514 the victim very ill; at other times it is placed between the limbs of two trees, as are the pieces of refuse; the rubbing of the branches causes a sore in the victim's throat.

C. White Magic and the Healer

755 White magic is an effective force used to cure sickness, heal wounds, take away the malignant effect of a snake bite, and, in general, to remove from the individual a feeling of dysphoria and to give him a sense of well-being and adjustment to his community.

The white magician usually performs this function and applies this power. He can remove foreign objects which have been shot into the body of the sick man, and diagnose on the principle that the patient can live if the cause of illness is only a foreign object, but must die if his soul is stolen.

756 *Individuality and Social Personality of the White Magician.*—The individuality of the white magician is not different from that of the ordinary man. The only noticeable tendency in all the observed healers was their joviality and pleasantness in their ordinary social relations. There were no indications of the psychopathic personality, for psychologically and physically they were a very normal group.

The social personality of the healer is different from that of the ordinary man's only because of his additional magical powers; otherwise he participates in the culture much the same as anyone else. He marries, has children, hunts, fishes, fights, and enters the ceremonial life in a manner no different from that of other men. There is but one [784] rigid taboo on his behavior: he canont submerge himself in salt water without losing his power. Evidence is conflicting as to the existence of • [262] food taboos. If there are such, they were not observed nor did the magicians admit any. The most successful healers were observed eating the foods which some of the evidence claimed were taboo to them. The reason for the belief in such restrictions seems to be that during their novitiate they undergo certain food privations.

The healer gains his power through extraordinary experiences with two or possibly three soul-children who afterwards become his helpers. [787] Both the medicine man and his familiars are called marngit. He can, in some cases, foretell the future and read a man's mind.

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an hour or more: the spirits of the black magicians come out in the smoke and their faces are visible. The doctor comes back to the general camp and people say to him, "You have seen somebody, haven't you?" He replies, "Oh, no, I have seen nothing." If the magicians who have killed the man are still in the camp and hear this, they leave immediately, for they know the doctor knows who has done it and that he will tell the truth presently. The doctor then tells the relatives, who gather their spears to go kill the magicians and to avenge the death of their kinsman.

An old woman had been ill for a number of days in the camp. Willidjungo came up and looked at her and said, "That woman is going to die tonight." The other people said, "How do you know?" He replied, "My spirits told me." That night the old woman died.

Willidjungo was on Millingimbi Island in the Crocodile Group one day when he said that a certain clansman was dead on the mainland. The clansman's relatives said, "How do you know that?" He replied, "My spirit children flew over to the mainland and saw it and came back and told me." That same day some men came in a canoe from the mainland and brought the news that the man was dead.

Mun-yir-yir Acquires Power and Becomes a Medicine Man.—"I found my doctor spirits in my country, in the snake country. I was out hunting for bandicoot and I had caught one and was cooking him. I think perhaps those doctor spirits smelled that bandicoot cooking. I went down to a creek to get some water to drink. I leaned over and drank out of the water hole. When I did that a doctor soul caught my nose and made me sink down in the water. I was in a coma and fell in the water. The doctors, they were two boys and a girl, took my hand and put it in a dry place [to help him up]. They took out something from inside my body when I was sick after falling in the water and they opened my eyes and nose and mouth and made me well. They blew in my mouth. I got up and took my stone axe. I hit one of those doctor souls on the nose and I hit the others, too. They looked like opossums. When I caught them, one of the men doctor souls said, 'You make us well now.'

"I blew on the man and made him well, then I made the others well. They said to me, 'Now you go back to camp. Don't you eat dog any more, but you eat cold food and don't sleep near the fire.'

"When I got near the camp those opossums called out to me. They made a loud noise. The people said, 'Look out for Munyiryir. He has found some familiars.' These familiars hit their arms against their sides and made a popping noise. I came and sat down in my camp. I slept. I slept a little while in the night and went out in the bush. Those two took me to the bush with them. I did not try to make anybody well.

"I went to Elcho Island from the Naladaer country and then came back again to the mainland. Some of the people said to me, 'We are sick here

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and acts generally in imitation of this bird. When he reaches the boys, he bows at their feet. The leader walks along beside him beating his singing sticks and singing the taboo names of this little bird. Two men dance a grotesque step which makes them appear deformed. They are mokoi trickster spirits.

Two "wallabys" now arrive, hopping along on their hands and feet and imitating other actions of the wallaby. Following them a large gray kangaroo (kai-tjim-bal) and a black-faced kangaroo appear. The last falls down and sleeps; he is considered a very sleepy creature by the natives.

A group of dogs come out crawling on their bellies. They howl like dingoes.

The dance of the mopoke owl and the bush rat is next. The rat crawls in on his hands and knees. The owl, squatting on his haunches, follows after, carrying leaves in each hand. He pounces upon the rat, but the leader kicks him over. This is repeated a number of times, and causes much laughter among the onlookers.

Brush turkeys next appear, and fires are lit all along the dance ground and back in the bush as when the natives try to smoke out these birds in hunting them.

The Dua honeybee dance follows. Two parallel lines of men about six feet apart start at the direction of the leader about one hundred and fifty yards back in the bush. They dance in a rapid rhythm, the members of each line crossing over and taking the place of the other group. When they reach the dance ground they all lie flat on their backs in a long line with the head of one dancer lying between the legs of the one ahead of him.

The stone kangaroos dance again, as well as the big gray kangaroo and the wallabys. This finishes for the moment the initiation of the young boys. They are led away toward the women's camp and left in a convenient clump of bushes between the men's camp and the women's while the initiation of another age group into a higher grade in the men's association takes place. The young men, who are to see the totemic emblem for the first time, run away from the dance ground because they are to be put on a vegetable diet (see Section H, 3) and suffer the taboo of silence for a period of time. The older men run after them and bring them back.

4. Meanwhile, at the tail of the snake dance ground, Yurlunggur is in the "python well" of the Liaalaomir people. He can be heard roaring in a very slow rhythm. The young men stand with their heads

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that he will be allowed to have for twenty-four hours. The basket is placed in the boy's mouth to prevent him from crying and to help him bear the pain.

The initiates do cry in spite of the basket. When they do, the men call out with a high trill which is supposed to be a snake's voice. The little boys beg to be turned loose. They are laid on top of the supine men and then held firmly so that they cannot move. The men's chorus surrounds the scene of the operation and it is impossible for the women to view this part of the ceremony. Some of the women dance around the men. One man cuts one boy, while at the same time a second individual circumcises the other. A neat operation is performed, and it is seldom that an infection sets in.

After each boy is cut, a man picks him up and runs with him back to the men's ground. After the man has washed his hands thoroughly with water, he warms them over a lighted fire stick. The wound is also washed and warmed by the man's hand.

The foreskin is put in a paper-bark basket filled with water. Later it is taken out and wrapped with paper bark and a pandanus string. It is hung on a basket as one of its pendants. It is supposed to be kept by the father until the boy grows up, when it is given to him. It is improbable that the boy ever receives the basket, but ideally this is the proper method of finally disposing of the foreskin.

6. Just after the circumcision is completed the leader approaches each man who has participated in the Djungguan ceremony and pulls a feather off the latter's body as a sign that the ceremony is over. This also has a magical significance: it is supposed to prevent any illness or other bad luck from coming to each participant because of his part in the "powerful" Djungguan ceremony. (The same idea exists in the leaders' rubbing the back of the dancer in the Gunabibi ceremony.)

7. Until this period in the boy's life and during the ceremony until the actual circumcision, the boy is allowed to eat any food that he may obtain, but after this he is not allowed to eat any large game until the rainy season has "made the grass come again." He is not allowed to drink water until the following day; he is told a great flood has covered the earth and made the water salty, the sea has covered the land and there is no fresh water to drink.

Native Interpretation.—When a child is circumcised the snake and the flood are supposed to have come again. Here is a typical statement

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that time is represented on the bark tray. The boy is given a piece of kangaroo meat or some other food and an old man says, "That is not kangaroo. You tell me the name of that which you're eating. What is it?" 852 869

An old man sits beside the youth and whispers a totemic name of the animal into the ear of the boy. The boy then calls out this esoteric name as he swallows the food. As he says the totemic name all the men cry out, "Yai!!! yai!!!" The whole list of foods is gone through, the boy eating them and being told the taboo name of each. Even though the food is not represented on the bark tray, its name is told him and another pellet takes the place of the missing edible. During the ritual the little boys are informed that if they impart any of the information they have been given, "something will happen to their mothers," and that the old men will spear them if they inform any of the women or children. They are told that the old men will know by magic if they betray their secrets. All the men insist that a boy would be killed if he gave away the secrets of the men.—When the ritual is finished, the fire and logs are covered with sand and earth, and men and boys return to the main camp. 852 869 626

The newly circumcised boys are kept away from all women and remain with the men until the wound is healed and they can walk and urinate without pain or effort. Then the pubic coverings they have been wearing, the ones in which the women saw them before circumcision, are taken off; a short song is played over them and they are burned, others being placed on the boys to symbolize the change in biological and social status. The boys are watched over most carefully by the men during the entire ceremony, as well as during a period after the circumcision. Some older man is always with them. This attention is given both to keep them away from the women and because it is felt that during a circumcision initiation a boy should have every luxury given him and the best of everything that the group has to offer. 852 [291]

Older boys show greater emotion and expression of pain than the younger ones when they are operated upon. The younger ones stop crying almost immediately after the operation.

3. The older age grade of youths who have been shown the totemic emblem of the python for the first time (see Section F, 4) are put on a vegetable diet for a period determined by the leader of the ceremony, ordinarily about a week. At the end of the period the young men are taken to the men's ceremonial grounds where they are painted by 852 561 262 382

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some of the older men with the totemic design of their clan, the leader and the older men meanwhile singing the totemic names of the clans, animals, and sacred clan wells over the youths. They can now eat anything they desire. The taboo of silence (see Section F, 3) is also removed at this time. The leader of this ceremony, who, as has been said before, is usually the head of the Liaalaomir clan, is always given presents by the newly initiated boys. These presents consist of all varieties of food, weapons and other elements of the material culture. The whole family of the boy, both men and women, help him. Only the old men can participate in the consumption of food that is given in payment.

4. The ceremonial trumpet (Yurlunggur) is put back in the totemic well of the clan whose leader has been giving the ceremony. It is buried at night in the mud so that the women will not see it when they are at the well. If it is in good condition at the time the next ceremony is held, it will be used for this occasion; if not, it is reburied and a new trumpet made.

Native Interpretation.—The reference in the native interpretation in Section E which says a man cannot eat anything when he has blood on him because he is unclean, indirectly explains the superficial reasons for placing the taboo on the older boys.

A general summary of the interpretation of each ritual section will be given in Chapter XI.

THE GUNABIBI CEREMONY

A. Preliminaries

1. Mandelprindi, the bull roarer, is made.
2. The young men are chosen for initiation by the leader.

1. The season chosen for the Gunabibi is always the dry period as soon as the food is plentiful, after the luxuriant spear grass has been burned and travel becomes easier. This ceremony lasts from two months to two years. At the discretion of the leaders it may be shortened or indefinitely prolonged. The information that a large group of people is coming from a long distance to participate at the Gunabibi often causes the leader to continue the preliminary stages a month or more while waiting for the visitors.

When the ceremonial leaders of the Liaalaomir clan have decided that it is time to start the Gunabibi ritual, it is usually the younger brother of the Liaalaomir leader who goes out into the men's ground

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852 men paint themselves on the ceremonial grounds for the morning's dance, and then sit down in a circle within the general camp. They throw spears at the boys who are to be circumcised and then take them inside the ceremonial grounds. The chief animals represented are dog, kangaroo, and honeybee. The ceremonial leader, when the men have almost completed their painting, returns to the camp. He has a large pair of singing sticks.

Native Interpretation.—The native interpretation of this second section will be discussed in the general analysis, Chapter XI.

C. The Women's Mat Dance

1. The young initiate (or initiates) and his mother's brother's daughter are put under an ainmara.
2. Fires are lighted and clan names called out.

1. The men who do not figure in the dancing, but who take part in the ceremony as members of the men's chorus, go with the leader to the main camp.

In the cleared space in the center of the camp the initiate is put under the woman's mat with his feet sticking out from under it. A young woman, preferably his galle, is put under the ainmara with him. The boy's mother (arndi) and his mother's mother (mari) stand over him. They wave their head circlets over him because this [262] is supposed to take away any harmful effect his eating the flesh of large animals may have had—in other words, from having eaten any of the things permitted up until this time, but which from now on he will not be allowed to include in his diet until he is married and has a child.

852 533 2. The leader and chorus sing fire (Laid-dal-ma-yao-yao) during this part of the ceremony. Fires are lighted at this point, which is a signal for the dancers to come out. The taboo names of many clan territories are called out by the leader and chorus. The women slap their thighs and keep time with the men's singing and the beating of the singing sticks. All the women are painted with red ocher 852 except the two who stand over the boy. They are painted in a rough [302] imitation of him. The women sit while the men stand. The men have their spear-throwers lying on the back of their necks and a hand on each end of the weapon. The scene at this part of the Marndiella corresponds to that at the end of the Djungguan at the time of the circumcision.

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but the power name is not given to the food for them. The natives agree that this food is eaten because all Wongar yolno did the same thing. If the leader gives the food with his name to it to his friends from another tribe, his own clanspeople would wait until there was an opportunity and kill him, because they do not want to have that name go to another tribe.—All my most reliable informants gave me this information.

Yiritja and Dua both eat this food, providing they are from one country, which really means, if they are closely related. My most intelligent informant said this: "Dorng and Ilkara [two men of the Liaalaomir group] can eat our food which has a big name because their sister married one of our people. It is all right for the Ritarngo to eat Warumeri and Wangurri food which has a big name because we have one ranga, because we are friends. Sometimes we give our ranga from the Warumeri side to the Ritarngo and they give us rangas from the land side. That is because that duck came from the Ritarngo to us in Wongar days."

2. The string is taken from the totemic emblems, wrapped around the hand into a neat ball, and placed in a basket. The carved-log ranga (see page 340) is hidden once more in the mud of the ceremonial leader's totem well. It is said that the leader likes to have them all remain there. The men can eat no animal food, but only bush (vegetable) food, until they have been painted. The old men say to them, "You must do what we tell you. Put your head and ears to these things. You don't want to swear at your old men or your big brothers. You want to talk a good way to them. We don't want you to steal. You don't want to go running after other men's women." The old men also tell the younger ones which rangas belong to the different totemic wells and which wells belong to the various clans. This ends the Dua Narra ceremony.

Native Interpretation.—The old men say, "This makes one people."

THE YIRITJA NARRA CEREMONY

A. Preparation

1. The same general preparations are made as those before the Dua Narra.

1. The Yiritja Narra ceremony parallels the Dua Narra rites. After a log has been cut, scraped, and carved, the leader sends out word to the various surrounding clans that a Narra is to be held. A Duni

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not eat the whale because his food is not good. If one floats up on the seashore we use his ribs for rungas."

"When the dancers shrug their shoulders in the whale dance it means those whales [who are diving] are copulating. That's the way those Wongar whales did. Dugongs do the same way too."

"That jungle fowl belonged to the Wongar yolno who owned that house. He was a true jungle fowl when he was in Wongar days."—"He was not a man at this time, but a bird."

G. The Ring-of-women Dance Is Repeated (See Sections C and F)

After this the leader says, "We will all go out to the main camp now." When the women see them coming they gather in a circle and squat beneath their ainmaras. The men dancers walk, pulling their spear-throwers after them. They are calling out the power name of water and are supposed to be dancing it. Near the camp, they call out once more the name of water, and then the leader sings out power names of cloud, barrimundi, and the albatross. When they reach the women, two men who are albatross walk around the ring.

The leader calls out barrimundi. The chorus, who are standing, jump in the air in imitation of the barrimundi leaping out of the water, and then, while holding their spear-throwers, dance around the ring of women. The men form two lines, a flood group and a sea-tide group. While dancing around the women they pull their spear-throwers along the ground as before, to symbolize a low tide, then raise their spear-throwers, which means the tide is growing higher, until finally it has reached full water. The leader says now, "We'll awaken these women."

When the dancers come they are the same as fresh water and they push the bream out into the ocean. The leader then calls up rain water running in floods down the creeks, and he runs around the ring. He then calls out bangles and the grass from which they are made, found near the totem wells. (See the first account in the duni version, page 360.)

Native Interpretation.—"The albatross flies around and around a canoe when it is out at sea or when it sees anything there on the ocean."

The women are the two Djunkgao sisters but they are also bream fish, for when the bream had come a long way he lay down, using an ainmara because he was tired. When the leader says, "We'll awaken these women," the reference is to the sleep of the two Djunkgao sisters.

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an approximate date of his first intrusion into the Arafura Sea by means of the tamarind tree. A few of the larger trees were cut down and cross-sections taken to show the number of growth rings on the tree. It was thought that by determining the amount of time shown by the tree rings and adding approximately two-thirds of the time it took the parent tree to grow, it might be possible to say at least that the Malay had been coming for the period represented by their growth, even though we could not say he had been in North Australia before this. Unfortunately, according to competent botanists, it is impossible to date a tamarind by its tree rings.

The writer excavated two large shell mounds on Millingimbi Island, in the Crocodile group, both of which had tamarind trees near, or growing on them. One of these kitchen middens surrounded a water hole that was known generally to all the aborigines as Macassar Well. Although I was able to accumulate a large collection of native artifacts in the eight feet of shell excavated, I did not find any that were Malay. This, however, does not demonstrate a late Malay invasion because negative evidence does not prove the Malay was not there. Furthermore, the bases of the trunks of the tamarind trees on the mound were well covered with refuse shell. One tree was, by measurement, well over a foot under the accumulated shell. Since the accumulated refuse was well packed and hardened by time, this seems to point to a considerable period of Malay contact with North Australia. The number of people using this mound was never large, and it would take such a group a considerable period of time to throw away a sufficient number of mollusk shells to form a foot of debris around the base of a tamarind tree.

The ripe tamarind pods are eaten and greatly appreciated by the natives. They are looked upon as a part of the general economic flora, although it is known that they were derived from the Malay. No native would ever think of planting a tamarind tree for later use.

From this brief summary of the Malay influence on the material culture of the Murngin, it is obvious that the number of Malay contributions was small, and especially when considered from the larger aspect of the total aboriginal culture, of no great numerical importance. Looked at from the point of view of Malay civilization, it can be seen that the greater part of Malay technology was not adopted. All the objects taken over by Murngin culture were but modifications of original indigenous inventions, with the possible exception of the Malay pipe. The exotic dugout canoe, with its mast and sail, partially took the place of the bark canoe, but did not entirely supplant it. The tamarind tree, although a part of the culture because it contributes, however slightly, to the Murngin larder, is not a true cultural element, since Murngin civilization is in no way responsible for its existence. It is an integral part of Malay culture, since it is planted and is

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The Man, Waikinbu, at Cape Shield

*773 *532 [827] At Cape Shield, during mythical times, a *jiritja* man, *Waikinbu*, speared two large fish in a nearby lagoon. He cooked them, had a very large meal, then lay down in the shade of the trees to sleep off the effects, leaving the fish beside the camp-fire. But he slept so long that the fish, becoming fly-blown and putrid, created such a stench that heavy thunder-clouds formed over the top of them.[89]

The long ellipse, Pl. 91B, is the lagoon at Cape Shield in which *Waikinbu*, lower right, speared the two fish. The design across the centre of the ellipse is the camp-fire where *Waikinbu* cooked his catch, and at *a* is the tree under which he went to sleep. The short strokes on the periphery of the ellipse represent the maggots from the decaying fish travelling away from it in long lines. At *b* and *c* are the tracks of the *gunjun* crabs leaving their holes to eat the fish. When *Waikinbu* woke and looked up into the sky he saw that three thunderstorms, *d*, *d*, *d*, had formed in the sky over the putrid fish. The boomerang shapes indicate small stratus clouds which form underneath the thunderstorms.

The central ellipse of the painting is now an extensive lagoon and the tracks of the maggots and of the crabs are lines of sand-hills close to the shore.

The Rain-makers, Wuluwait and Bunbulama

*773 989 *532 When the mythical people *Wuluwait*, the man, and *Bunbulama*, the woman, wanted rain they tied bundles of water-grass together and soaked them in the swamp. The aborigines still follow a similar practice. After the bundles have been in the water for a day or more, clouds begin to form. In a short time the rain not only falls but continues to do so as long as the rain-making bundles are left in the swamp.

The figures in Pl. 94C are the rain-makers, *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*,[90] with the magic bundles in their hands. Above them is a rainbow, with the rain, vertical cross-hatched panels, falling from it. The black space between the rain symbols is a gap in the storm. The hair radiating from the heads of the rain-makers is also associated with rain, one informant stating that, instead of hair, the water-grass used to make up the rain-making bundles grew from the heads of the mythical people. On the bottom edge of the painting, reading from the left, the first two cone-like figures are rocks and the last three, termite mounds associated with the totem place of the rain-makers. The vertical lines on the sides represent falling rain. Rain is also pouring from the two rain-making bundles.

The Man, Nalili, at Caledon Bay

*773 *532 262 The mythical *jiritja* man, *Nalili*, lived on the sea coast and beside the swamps of Caledon Bay, collecting as food shell-fish, crabs and oysters from among the mangroves, and fruit, yams and animals from the forest and swamps at the rear.

89. There is a *dua* myth of the thunder-man *Tjambuaral* in which the stench of rotting fish caused thunderstorms and rain (Pl. 89D).

90. See carved wooden figure of woman, *Bunbulama*, Pl. 133A, B, and bark figures of *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*, Fig. 65C, D; also colour plate facing p. 267.

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'Last night a *jurtu* came and asked me for a mother, so I sent it to you.' Within a short time the mother shows signs of pregnancy.

In the middle of Pl. 99B is *Tjainbuwal*, holding the spirit child, *jurtu*, by the hand. Over his head are the boomerang-shaped clouds, *wulma*. The groups of curving cross-hatched panels on the upper edge and the left-hand side of the painting are rain clouds, *b*, the home of the spirit child. On the right-hand side are two men spearing a turtle inhabited by a *jurtu* and on the left a pregnant woman. The curving cross-hatched lines at *a*, on the extreme right of the painting, represent the water disturbed by the wounded creature.

(ii) *The Conception Beliefs of the Jiritja Moiety*

The conception beliefs of the *jiritja* moiety vary somewhat from those of the *dua*. They believe that when a woman ceases to menstruate her blood goes into the sky and is there changed into a spirit child, *jurtu*. After some time the little *jurtu*, desiring an earthly mother, creates a thunderstorm and a rainbow, and, using the raindrops as a vehicle of travel, descends to the earth. If the *jurtu* falls into the sea, it enters some *jiritja* creature such as a dugong, a hawksbill turtle or a queen fish; if on the land, a hive of *jiritja* honey, *kamon* or *barangit*, or the body of some *jiritja* creature. Should the aborigines spear a dugong and find that it is particularly fat, or locate a hive well stocked with honey, they know that the dugong or the hive is inhabited by a spirit child.

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When, for example, the dugong is cut open, and the *jurtu* escapes, it visits the sleeping father and asks him which of his wives is to be his mother. As with the *dua* moiety, the father points out a wife who has ceased menstruating. The child enters her body through the vulva. If the father remembers next morning he tells the expectant mother about his dream. Soon afterwards the woman feels the movements of the *jurtu* within her body. As soon as a woman ceases to menstruate, she must not eat meat or fish. Her diet is limited to grass-seeds, yams, the fruit of the cycad, shell-fish and crabs.

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On Pl. 99C the father and pregnant mother are at the upper edge of the painting. On either side of them are large thunder-clouds created by the spirit child, *jurtu*. On the right of the painting is falling rain, parallel lines of cross hatching, and on the extreme left two dugongs; the cross-hatching around them is the sea. The U-shaped symbol is a rainbow created by the little *jurtu*, at the base of which is one who has descended on the raindrops. He is swimming about in the sea, waiting for an opportunity to enter the body of one of the dugongs which, he hopes, will be captured by the men in the canoe.[12] The artist explained that he had made a mistake by not allowing himself enough room to paint the dugong in the canoe with the spirit child inside of it. So he painted the *jurtu* only.

12. The *jurtu*, like the *muri* of the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia, are, before they enter the mother, complete, self-directing beings. Mountford and Harvey (1941), p. 159.

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Salt-water Fish

Plate 119D depicts a number of salt-water fish.[46] On the bottom is a row of seven saw-fish, *baraka* (*Pristis* sp.). On the right-hand side at *a* are two rows of four sharks, *djerun-berunaui*; above them at *b*, seven gar-fish, *ma-aua* (*Tylosurus* sp); and opposite, at *c*, three shovel-nosed rays, *bandrung* (*Rhynchobatus* sp.). The cross-hatched areas represent the sea.

(6) Insects

The Stingless Honey Bee, Koko

During creation times there were two *dua* groups of the wild bees, *koko* (*Trigona carbonaria aughophorie*), the male ancestor being *jarapang* and the female, *lirawar*. These male and female bee ancestors lived in a hollow tree near the edge of a large swamp at Macuti on the Koolatong River.[47]

Plate 120C represents two hives, the male wild honey, *jarapang*, on the right and the female honey, *lirawar*, on the left. The significance of the divisions are the same in both hives. The dome at the top represents the bee bread (young bees and pupae); *f*, more bee bread; while panels *b* and *d* are honey and *a*, *c* and *e* beeswax. All these parts of the hive are edible. The aborigines distinguish clearly between the flavour of *jarapang* and *lirawar* honey. [261]

Plate 120A is a representation of a group of hives of the honey bee. The black transverse lines *a*, *a*, picture the limbs of the tree in which the hive is built. The dots in the panel *b* are the bees, the cross-hatched central section, *c*, the honey and the honey-comb. Hard wax, much sought after for mounting spears and other implements, is indicated by the dotted transverse band *d*; the dotted panel *e* pictures the rubbish, dead bees and excreta from the hive. Tree roots are indicated by the lower cross-hatched band, *f*. Both the male hive, *jarapang*, and the female hive, *lirawar*, are in this group. Reading from the right, one, two and five are *jarapang*, three and four *lirawar* hives. [237]

(7) Topography

The Sea and the Sky

*532 This bark painting depicts a wet-season seascape. It makes an interesting comparison with a painting of a similar subject by a European artist. Although the aboriginal pictured the sky in the same manner as a white man, that is, in side elevation, he has painted the sea in plan, so that he can show the creatures on the sea-floor.[48]

In the upper panel of Pl. 120B are three thunderstorms drifting across the sky. The black bases of the two on the right indicate that they have not yet discharged their rain. The cross-hatching on the upper edge, however, indicates rain. On the left is a thunderstorm which has almost expended itself, although the rain is still falling. The clear space between the storms is the blue sky. The

46. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler. 47. Map. Fig. 57.
48. This characteristic is not unusual in the art of the more advanced people, e.g. Pl. 286.

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lower section is the open sea, as viewed from above. The dark cross-hatched areas indicate the sandy sea bottom, and the light-coloured areas the sea. The creatures are stingrays, the crescent-shaped marks on their bodies being masses of fat which the aborigines value as food.*

Trial Bay

Plate 120D pictures the surroundings at a *dua* totemic spot near Trial Bay. At *a* on the lower right-hand panel are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and the sea-urchins (circles), on which they feed. The top turtle has a black seagull resting on its back and the one below, a white bird.[49] The next panel, *b*, shows rocks, Marin, which project above the water at Trial Bay. The vertical cross-hatched band to the left represents the waves beating against the rocks, and the black panel, *f*, another totemic rock, Nangi, the panels of chevron designs on either side of *f* symbolizing the rays of the sun. In the extreme left panel *e* are bone fish, *warawanda*, and a row of sea-urchins.

The Milungwira Swamps and the Men, Laitjun and Bourngauwili

The Milungwira swamp, situated north of Blue Mud Bay at the mouth of the River Girituwi, is an important totemic place in the *jiritja* mythology. It is associated with the mythical man *Laitjun*,[50] another man, *Bourngauwili*, a dingo, *dulairuju*, a water-snake, *gamarana*, and a rat, *nik-nik*.[51]

Four bark paintings are associated with Milungwira and its totemic inhabitants.

Plate 121B pictures the Milungwira swamp and the man, *Bourngauwili*, who with his dog, *dulairuju*, had set out to hunt the rat, *nik-nik*, and yellow water-snake, *gamarana*. In the lower left panel *a* is the dog, *dulairuju*, and in the upper right panel *c* the rat, *nik-nik*, swimming through a swamp covered with the leaves of water-lilies, *jouku*. The meandering lines behind *nik-nik* indicate where it has pushed the lily leaves aside. The upper left and lower right-hand panels *b* and *d* illustrate those parts of the swamp which are covered with water-lily leaves. The bulbs of the lilies are an important aboriginal food. The eight small circles, *e*, *e*, on the outer edge of the design are subsidiary swamps, Mailuju, where small bamboos, used by the aborigines for spear shafts, grow in abundance. The circle in the centre of the painting is the dry-season home of the yellow water-snake, *gamarana*, which no aboriginal will go near. During the wet season these snakes leave their waterhole, go into the sky and create the rain, the thunderstorms and the lightning.[52] The four birds are herons, *balir*; the tracks on the right-hand

* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXII.

49. It is not an unusual sight in the Gulf of Carpentaria to see a bird resting on the back of a basking turtle. The resting bird indicates to the aborigines that the turtle is on the surface.

50. See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

51. *Nik-nik* was the 'dog' of the woman, *Mahrahwi*. See carved figure, Pl. 133D, and myth, p. 151.

52. This appears to be a parallel myth to that of the *bilumbira* of Cape Arnhem, p. 351.

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or ceremonial peacemaking fight, a custom which has been carried on by the aborigines ever since.[86]

The aborigines made five bark paintings of Garabi and its creatures.

Plate 122A pictures Wakwala, one of the islands of the Garabi group. The two rectangles in the lower panel are the totemic places of the hawksbill turtle and the crocodile. The cone-like figures above are thunder-clouds, with rain falling from them. A hawksbill turtle is on the lower right. In the upper panel is the crocodile and several stingrays. Around them are squares and circles which indicate where the stingrays once buried themselves in the sand.[86] These are now rocks on the sea coast. On the upper right the stingray is attacking the crocodile with his spear to avenge the death of a relative.

Plate 122B illustrates the Garabi Islands and the sea-creatures which live in the surrounding waters.[87] The islands and the large rocks of the Garabi Islands are indicated by *a*, *a*, *a*, and similar designs. There are four hawksbill turtles at *b*, *c*, *d* and *e*, rock cod at *f*, *f*, and a small fish, *jonbauk*, at *g*. On the left-hand side of the turtle at *c* are two queen fish.

Plate 122C is another representation of Garabi. At the bottom of the painting is one of the islands of the Garabi group with five unidentified palm trees growing from it. The aborigines eat the young shoots of these trees, which they call *bulmarik*. At *a* and *b*, on the top edge of the painting, are two thunder-clouds with rain falling from them (cross-hatched panels). A hawksbill turtle (lower left) lays its eggs in the sandy beaches of the island and gathers its food from among the coral rocks (four rectangles right of centre). The rain falling from the clouds, at *a*, *b*, has stimulated the six stingrays, *c*, *c*, to go to the mangrove swamps and produce their young.[88]

[262]

The upper panel of Pl. 122D pictures two of the humpbacked whales. Later they went into the sky and their bodies became islands at Garabi. In the lower panel is the stingray spearing the crocodile. The cross-hatched panels on either side of the stingray, and the black rectangles below the crocodile, are holes made by the stingray when, during mythical times, it buried itself in the sand. These holes have since been transformed into boulders projecting from the sea.

Plate 122E is a descriptive painting of a place at Garabi where swollen streams muddy with the wet-season rains pour into the ocean and mix with the clear sea-water. The semi-circles, *a*, *a*, represent the muddy flood-waters diffusing into the sea; the meandering lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of squares depict a mixture of muddy and clear waters, and those at *b*, *b*, *b*, *b*, the uncontaminated sea-water. In squares at the bases of semi-circles *a*, *a*, are mangrove seeds which have taken root in the mud, and at *c*, *c*, two bone fish, *jungulu*. The long ellipse symbolizes a mangrove tree, *banduma*, growing in the mouth of the stream.

85. Warner (1937), p. 174, gives a detailed description of the *mahanaba*.
86. When stingrays are alarmed they bury themselves in the sand to escape notice.
87. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
88. See myth of stingrays on painted paddle, Pl. 109F, F, p. 340.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 C827 Murngin C827

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

Cato River

Plate 123A pictures the surroundings on the Cato River.[59] The dark triangle in the lower part of the painting is a swamp into which flows the Cato River, the upper meandering cross-hatched band. In the upper end of the waterhole are two tortoises, *marulait*, copulating, and below, a fish, *hailaki*. On the lower right is a mythical snake; on each side of his head, and to the right of his tail, are palm trees, *gwiveti* (probably *Livistona humilis*). The chevron pattern to the left of his tail symbolizes the water running from the body of the serpent[60] as it emerges from the waterhole. Other palm trees are shown at *b*, *b*, *b*, while the diagonal lines on *c*, *c*, are the tributaries pouring their water into the Cato River. Water-goannas are depicted at *d*, *d*, *d*, the dots surrounding them being the bubbles rising to the surface as they gather their food from the bottom. The dots on the trunks of the palms symbolize bees searching the palm tree flowers for honey.

A Sea Scene

Plate 123B deals with a number of sea-creatures on the shore.[61] In the top right-hand panel, *a*, the artist has drawn four *dua* green turtles, many sea-urchins, the food of the turtles, two sea-snakes, and in the top left, *c*, three young turtles and more sea-urchins. Immediately below them, at *d*, are three more turtles, called *buraka*. There was no explanation for the upturned canoe within the rectangle *e*. On the opposite side three mullet, *warmwarn*, and three logs of wood occupy panel *b*.

Fresh-water Swamps near Yirrkalla

Plate 123C is the picture of an unidentified fresh-water swamp near Yirrkalla. Panel *a* depicts water-lily bulbs,[62] with three of them sprouting. The fresh-water fish occupy the centre of panel *b*. The anvil-like projections on each side of the fish are cumulus clouds. In the narrow transverse panel, *c*, a woman is collecting lily roots. At her feet is a dog, and to the right of her head, three fresh-water fish, their native names being *paipingu*, *magpuna* and *bilda* respectively. Panel *d* is a swamp and on its upper edge two cormorants, *gurmalu*, are searching for fish. The muddy areas of the swamp are cross-hatched, and the clear water is represented by parallel lines. In *e* is a stand of *rulkan* trees, which grow along the banks of fresh-water streams. The dotted areas between the five right-hand trees indicate fallen fruit. High up on the outer branch of the left-hand tree is a Torres Strait pigeon, *marlul* (*Myristicivora spilorrhoa*). The rectangle on the extreme left depicts the nest of the pigeon, with a young bird in the upper right-hand corner. The rectangle with the diagonal lines is a spider web.

59. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.
60. This resembles the *mata* design of the *ngrimil* language group, Fig. 63E.
61. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.
62. Probably the bulbs of the water-lily (*Nymphaea gigantea*), which provide a plentiful aboriginal food supply for many months of the year.

532 [262]

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

(8) The Art of Milingimbi

The Rev. Arthur F. Ellemor made a small collection of Milingimbi bark paintings for the expedition, together with simple but incomplete interpretations. This collection was valuable because it shows that the art of Milingimbi, on the west of north-eastern Arnhem Land, and that of Yirrkalla on the east, are similar both in design and mythological content.

The Wild Honey, Koko

The honey of the stingless bee is one of the few sweet foods in the aborigines' menu. Many hours are spent searching for this food and a great deal of labour expended climbing the trees and cutting out the hives. Four bark paintings[66] were collected dealing with the mythical wild-honey ancestors of Milingimbi.

Plate 125C is associated with a mythical wild-honey woman, called *Birikuru*, whose camp was on the mainland south of Elcho Island. This site is a totemic place of the wild honey, *koko*. The painting is a conventionalized representation of a hive of wild bees, the projection from the upper edge being the 'nose' or entrance to the hive, and the central disc, the beeswax. The cross-hatched diamond-shaped patterns covering the bulk of the painting represent the honey comb, the white lines forming the margins of the various cells, the beeswax, and the dotted diamonds the eggs and young bees in the nursery cells.

Plate 125A is another painting of a hive of wild honey. The symbolism is similar to that in C, except that the artist has shown four entrances to the hive.

Plate 125D pictures *koko*'s totemic place at Murnarambul, near Arnhem Bay. The three transverse panels, *a*, *a*, *a*, and the vertical cross-hatched one, *b*, refer to logs lying on the ground near Murnarambul, in which there are hives of wild bees. Within the design made by these four logs are hives of wild bees. These hives are pictured with the same symbols as those in A and C, the two long triangular projections at the top of the painting being entrances to the hive.

Plate 125B is another painting of a hive of wild bees, using the traditional symbolism to show the wax, honey, eggs and young bees. The long rectangular design in the middle of the bark painting is a hollow tree in which there is a hive of bees, the honey and comb. The hive is again shown at the bottom of the central panel. The entrance or nose of the hive is a long tapering design at the top. The side panels illustrate two more hives.

Mimala, the Fresh-water Tortoise

Plate 126A pictures a forest area near Arnhem Bay, called Jaraga, the totem place of the mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*.[67] Three of these tortoises are shown at the top of the painting, the designs on each carapace representing the water-grass often growing on the backs of these creatures. The three dark-coloured vertical lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, are logs and the four panels of diamond-shaped

66. These designs are similar to those of the *dahwonga mata*, Fig. 61J.
67. *Mimala*, the fresh water tortoise, is also pictured on an engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 89D; on a painted coffin, Pl. 105B; and on another bark painting, Pl. 109A.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

another yam, *banumin*. But each woman became so engrossed in her own dance that she forgot about the other, and travelled in a different direction from that of her companion. *Bunbulama* finished her dance at Melville Bay where, in company with her husband, *Wʼulawait*,[58] they now entertain the spirits of *dua* dead whilst they are on their way to Purelko.[59] *Muralunangau*, on the other hand, danced her way to Bremer Island. But when *Muralunangau* was making camp she noticed the flowers with which she had decorated herself had all wilted. She became so sad and wept so violently that the sound of her grief caused the *timaru* wind to blow.[60]

At the present time, when the rainy season is nearing its end the women in the camp wail in unison, believing that the sound of their grief, like that of *Muralunangau*, will cause the wet-season wind, *barn*, to stop and the *timaru* wind to blow.[61]

The white cap on the head of *Muralunangau*, Pl. 136B, D, indicates the paint used when she decorated herself in readiness for her dance with *Bunbulama*. The yellow face on Pl. 136D is symbolic of the colour of the totemic clay-pan of the woman at Bremer Island. The black rectangle at *a*, Pl. 136B, is *Muralunangau's* carrying-bag. The cross-hatched panels on *Muralunangau's* body indicate falling rain.[62]

The Winds of Yirrkalla. Barn is a north-westerly *dua* wind which continues throughout the rainy season, extending from November to March. This is a time of scarcity for the aborigines, because the continuous rains, high humidity and heavy storms not only spoil most of the food, but prevent fishing.

Timaru, another *dua* wind, blows from the east-south-east and immediately succeeds the *barn*. The plants start to bear fruit and the underground tubers to mature during the period of this wind. The mythical woman, *Muralunangau*, of Bremer Island was responsible for the first *timaru* wind.[63] As mentioned previously, the aboriginal women endeavour to start the *timaru* wind by means of concerted wailing.

The *jiritja* wind, *lungurama*, which blows from a northerly direction, is sent to the aborigines of Yirrkalla by the spirits of the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. *Lungurama* brings many coco-nuts, lengths of bamboo and sometimes even Melanesian canoes;[64] all of these are looked upon by the Yirrkalla aborigines as gifts from the spirits of Nalkuma.[65] Food is plentiful during the period of this wind.

58. See myth associated with bark figure of *Bunbulama*, Pl. 65C, D.
59. See myth, journey of *dua* dead, p. 325. 60. See details of Groote Eylandt winds, p. 91.
61. The *timaru* is the wind following the wet season, a time of scarcity. It ushers in a period when the fruits start to ripen and the underground tubers mature.
62. As there is no mention of rain in the myth of *Muralunangau* it is not clear why these designs are painted on her body.
63. See myth of woman, *Muralunangau*, p. 433. 64. See carved pipe, p. 308.
65. Berndt (1948), p. 91, mentions that 'at the time of the north-east winds [no doubt *lungurama*], just after the wet monsoonal season, coco-nuts, cones, long pods, bread fruit and timber, with an occasional canoe (including some of the outrigger variety) are washed up on the mainland beaches and are said to have been sent by the spirits that inhabit Badu.' Berndt's Badu is my Nalkuma.

132 262 *Mamarika*[65] (*jiritja*), from the south-east, the major wind of the dry season, is not, during its early stages, a time of plenty. Towards its close, however, the cycad fruit, *natu*, ripens and provides the aborigines with ample food.

Following the *mamarika* is the *tjeleton*, a *jiritja* wind of short duration which blows first from the north-east, changing to the north-westerly *bara*. The cycad fruit is plentiful during this period.

Several other winds of short duration are recognized by the men of Yirrkalla—*djala* (southerly), *jauara* (south-west), and *ritain* (south-south-west). It is surprising that many of these winds were not mentioned by the Groote Eylandters.

Female Figure, Unidentified

*532 Plate 137C, D is a carved wooden figure similar in form to that of the pregnant woman, *Malwulwi* (Pl. 133C, D). I did not collect either the symbolism of the designs or the associated myth.

The Man, Naruwilja

*532 *773 During *bumun* (creation) times there lived at Biobajini, on the Wessel Islands, a fair-skinned *jiritja* man, *Naruwilja*. Not being satisfied with this human existence, he transformed himself into a fish, still bearing the name of *naruwilja*. But as that did not please him he tried the life of an octopus, *mainda*, only to find as little satisfaction in that condition. Finally he changed himself into a flying fox, *matur*, and has remained in that form ever since.

[825] The locality in which the flying foxes live at the Wessel Islands is forbidden to all. Should anyone trespass on their nesting place, and in particular kill a flying fox, the spirit of the creature will change itself into an octopus, enter the body of the miscreant, wrap its tentacles around his heart and kill him.[67]

Plate 136E, F is the carved and painted figure of the transformed man *Naruwilja*. In the right-hand panel of Pl. 136E is the octopus, *mainda*, and in the left, two flying foxes, *matur*. The fish, *naruwilja*, occupies the right-hand panel of Pl. 136F and the octopus, *mainda*, the left-hand panel.

The Macassan Woman, Jubara

*532 Plate 137A, B is the wooden figure of a woman, *Jubara*, who, many years ago, befriended an old aboriginal, *Amalatja*, when he was taken by trepangers to a Macassan village called Jumaina.[68] This figure is the work of *Mungrrawi*, the son of *Amalatja*.

66. See Groote Eylandt myths of *bara* (north-west) and *mamariga* (south-east) winds, p. 94.

[262] 67. Although I did not obtain the specific information, it is likely that this myth is told to the younger men so that they will not eat the flesh of the flying fox which, in many parts of the Northern Territory, is regarded by the aborigines as 'old man tucker'. There are numerous references to the food prohibitions of the young men in the myths of the Liverpool River area.

68. See description of a Yirrkalla painting of Macassan women weaving, by the same artist, Pl. 93A. The Berndts (1949), p. 213, describe a number of non-sacred carved figures of Macassan and Baijini people, most of which had been carved by *Mungrrawi*. Their figure on Pl. 2, Fig. 3, is wearing a similar decoration to *Jubara*.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 . Oil7 Muragin Oil7

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The Mosquito Sacred Object

Plate 132D is a sacred object of the mosquito totem of Milingimbi. It belongs to the *dua narra* ceremonies. Collected by F. M. Setzler.

3. CARVED AND PAINTED HUMAN HEADS

The Two Brothers, Buuaramin and Wururunga

The two brothers, *Buuaramin*[78] and *Wururunga*, set out to kill their enemy, *Djunmundia*, who had previously murdered their father.[79]

Plate 139D, E, A, H illustrates the carved heads of the two brothers, *Buuaramin* and *Wururunga*.

The designs on the face of *Buuaramin*, Pl. 139D, E, and the white line down the nose, which represents the deadly tiger-snake, *dunbania*, are always painted on the face of the aborigines when they are setting out on an avenging expedition. They are known as the 'death-marks'.[80] The darker cross-hatched panels on the side of the head, Pl. 139D, indicate the base of the thunder-clouds, and the lighter coloured ones, their white tops.

The white dots on the face of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139H, are hail-stones, *milarik*, and the hole at the base of the nose, an attempt to represent a skull, for *Wururunga* has long since been dead.

On the side of the head of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139A, the darker cross-hatched panel represents falling rain, and the lighter coloured ones a hail-storm. The white dots on the side of the head also indicate hail-stones. When these hail-stones fall to the ground in *dua* territory they are sometimes transformed into white stones, *milarik*.[81] The dots on the neck are falling rain, and the white cap, the tops of cumulus clouds.

The Spirit Man, Duwuliana

This *dua Mokoi*, *Duwuliana*, lives in a forest at Arnhem Bay. As his only food is the honey of the wild bees, he carries only a honey basket.[82]

At the beginning of the dry season the basket is clean, having been well washed by the heavy storms of the wet season. As the dry season advances the basket becomes progressively darker in colour, due to the accumulated honey and dirt, for *Duwuliana* is a careless fellow who never washes his honey basket, knowing that the next wet season will save him the trouble. At the beginning of the dry season the honey in the hives in the trees is a golden-yellow in colour, but it gradually darkens and becomes less pleasant to eat as the season advances. The aborigines blame *Duwuliana* for this change, claiming that if he were more cleanly and washed his basket regularly they would always have clear golden honey.

78. In the myth of the bark painting, Pl. 98A, *Buuaramin* is called *Tjuna-tjuna*.
79. See myth of *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga*, p. 303.
80. See myth, p. 305.
81. See the white stones, *milarik*, at the totem place of the thunder-man at Jalbua, Pl. 91F.
82. A tightly woven basket which will hold honey.

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

Everyday Life

262 511 Being a purely nomadic people, the greater part of the time of these aborigines is devoted to the procuring of food. The coastal districts of Arnhem Land are much better supplied than the arid areas of the inland, but even there a serious shortage of food is by no means infrequent. Almost all living creatures are eaten, as well as a large variety of roots and berries, but there is ever the daily uncertainty concerning the supplying of the body's needs.

461 517 When not engaged in hunting, the men spend many hours fashioning their weapons and utensils, in which work they display a marked degree of skill and ability. The preparations for, and the actual performance of, ceremonials occupy much time and energy, and in these their love of decorative and dramatic art finds truly remarkable expression.

462 The women are the real burden-bearers. When the camping ground is reached, it is the women who have to prepare the camp and obtain the necessary wood and water. Every day they engage in the search for food, such as the smaller animals, roots, berries, and shell fish. No matter how successful the men have been in their pursuit of larger game, the women must not fail in their daily contribution to the needs of the family. To them also falls the care of the younger children, and the construction of most of the utensils for ordinary use.

854 Great affection is shown by both parents for their children, who are rarely corrected, and whose every whim is responded to.

[142 145] When an aboriginal baby is born it is of a light yellowish colour, but during the course of a week or so darkens to the normal [302] chocolate-brown of the race. For the purpose of ensuring this deepening of colour, the infant, when two or three days old, is rubbed all over with a mixture of ashes and powdered charcoal.

[856] Immediately after birth the nose is flattened and the nostrils distended by finger pressure. The form of the skull is also moulded by the mid-wife's hands.

853 145 Babies are nursed by their mothers until they are up to four years of age, and during that period are extremely plump and soft-fleshed. After weaning, however, they quickly develop into the spindly-limbed form characteristic of the children of many PRIMITIVE RACES.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

131 from the Church Missionary Society settlement at Groote Eylandt,
797 and 90 miles from the nearest Methodist Mission at Elcho Island. Apart from the Mission stations of Roper River, Oenpelli, Goulburn Island, Milingimbi, Elcho Island, Yirrkalla and Groote Eylandt, which fringe the great Reserve, there is no other European settlement, except the new base subsidized by the Northern Territory Native Affairs Branch at Ambu Kambu on Groote Eylandt.

136 The whole region is rich in indigenous foods and resources, particularly along the coast. The sea abounds in dugong, turtle, fish,
262 crayfish, shellfish, oysters, and crabs: inland, on the plains and in the jungles, there are wildfowl, emu, wallaby, kangaroo, and smaller animals, fruit, nuts, vegetables, berries, and a large variety of other bush foods, with quantities of fresh-water fish and crocodiles in the streams and rivers; and at times buffalo which have wandered eastwards from the Buffalo Plains west of Oenpelli. So plentiful is the food that, even in bad seasons, the quality may diminish, but rarely the quantity.

b Social Organization:

114 Before proceeding to our main study, it is necessary to outline
184 briefly the structure of north-eastern Arnhem Land society. The work of Professor Lloyd Warner is the most reliable in this respect, while
121 the Rev. T. T. Webb and Dr. Donald Thomson have written on the subject.[1] The reader will find sufficient detail in these for our present
177 purpose. But it should be borne in mind that the organization of Yirrkalla society, although basically similar to that of Milingimbi, is in many respects decidedly different. Dr. Warner viewed aboriginal social life through the eyes of Milingimbi informants, influenced by cultural trends from Cape Stewart and the inland, while the present writer views the same position from the Yirrkalla point of view, uninfluenced to any marked degree from the west, but responding to contact from aboriginal groups to the south and south-west (this is particularly apparent in our study of the Kunapipi cult).

101 These people of eastern Arnhem Land, from Cape Stewart to Blue Mud Bay, had a general term for themselves—the Wulamba group of clans, forming a tribe with a more or less common cultural background: natives outside this region, such as those at Groote Eylandt, called them the "Balamumu" confederacy. Balamumu may
614 be broadly translated as "those of the sea", that is, coastal people.
197 The varying dialects (termed *mata*, "tongue") of these clans (*mala*)
616

1. L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, New York and London, 1937; T. T. Webb, Tribal Organization in Eastern Arnhem Land, *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 406-411; A. P. Elkin, Marriage and Descent in East Arnhem Land, *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 412-416; D. Thomson, *Interim General Report of Preliminary Expedition to Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia*, 1935-36, Department of Interior, Canberra, 1936, pp. 31-34.

6: Berndt R-5 (1946-1947) 1951
O117 Murngin O117

On the same evening, the young boys "passing through" the Kunapipi are placed on the heaped-up earth beside the *ba'uma* (*kanala*), and a shallow trench, some fifty feet long, is extended from one end. The *jelmalandji* have not yet been brought out. Various groups of men, representing mainly opossums, dance down this trench towards the boys. The initiates are moved to the shallow trench, and the men dance along it into the *ba'uma*. Then the boys are moved and placed in the *ba'uma* itself: this is the core of their Kunapipi experience. They are covered with bark and told to go to sleep; and as they lie there, "covered up in the hut like the Wauwalak Sisters", men dance the yam, opossum, wild honey, rat, wallaby, iguana, native companion and kangaroo - all those animals, birds, reptiles and vegetables which the Wauwalak attempted to cook. They dance down the shallow trench and almost on to the boys.

Then, suddenly, the bark that covers the boys is removed: they are dazed, as if from sleep. The older Kunapipi leaders step forward and, taking sweat from under their armpits, rub the palms of their hands across the eyes of the boys. They tell them to look up: "See, the Julunggul are emerging from the waters!"

"Which way?" they ask.

As they look they see the two Snakes standing beside the *ba'uma*, each supported by one man: these are the two *jelmalandji*, one the Julunggul and the other the "palm" tree. The boys are "very surprised", asking "What's this? Where did they come from?"

"They are the *jelmalandji*", reply the old leaders. And the two *dua* men holding the *jelmalandji* begin to shake them, "making the Snakes dance".

"Ah! ah!" The boys keep staring up at the great towering *jelmalandji*.

Then the men dance a series of totemic dances, similar to those mentioned above, before the *jelmalandji* and the boys.

These are followed by the spectacular "pokiti" head-dress dance, performed by two of the older men. They wear tall, conically shaped head-dresses, built up on top of the head from a basis of grass or bark pads, bound tightly with human-hair twine so that they taper to a point; this in turn is decorated with arm blood upon which down has been stuck to form the Snake design, and cockatoo or native companion feathers are attached to the apex. The word "pokiti" is pidgin English; the real "outside" secular name (widely known) is *kundja*, and the "inside" sacred name *milali*; when the two old men dance together they are called *jalwaru-* (or *jalwal*) *milali*. The actors are decorated with birds' down, and bunches of leaves are attached to their upper arms.

The "pokiti" itself represents the short pandanus or screw palm, seen by the Wauwalak, growing in the swamp at Muruwul: the movement of the head-dress in the dance signifies the pandanus

8: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1954
OI17 Murngin OI17

BACKGROUND

Once the term "Arnhem Land" was applied to the whole region east of Daly River, including the area about Darwin and Katherine, Melville and Bathurst Islands, and the "Buffalo country";[2] but since the Aboriginal Reserve was established, the name has been restricted to this. 131

All through this region, except in parts of the interior, there is no scarcity of food. In the rivers are fresh-water fish, goannas and crocodiles, in the sea and coastal bays many varieties of fish, shell-fish, turtle, dugong and (rarely) whales. At certain seasons the swamps and rivers, streams, waterholes and jungles, teem with wild fowl; eggs are plentiful, and (according to the time of the year) there is a choice of duck, goose, tern (or sea-gull), crocodile, turtle, emu and jungle fowl. Inland and along the coast there is an abundance of meat — kangaroo, wallaby, opossum, bandicoot, porcupine and edible reptiles. Moreover there are introduced water-buffalo, which abound in western Arnhem Land, and are seen today as far east as Yirrkalla, near Cape Arnhem. 136 262

Wild honey, fruits, berries, seeds, nuts and vegetable foods such as yam and lily roots and green lily stems, are available in season. And at the tail end of the monsoonal period the sea brings to this coast, particularly on the north-east, large supplies of drifting coconut and other edible nuts. 137 262

This, then, is roughly the position of the Arnhem Land Reserve, and it is upon the natural products of this country that the Aboriginal inhabitants have in the past primarily depended. Today, however, the Aborigine does not rely solely on his environment for subsistence. Long years of alien contact have developed in him a desire for introduced goods, a desire which was fulfilled to some extent when the Mission stations were established. 177

In order to examine the picture more closely, and to see the events presented in some historical sequence, we shall concentrate on the northern and eastern coast of Arnhem Land, and the adjacent islands within the Reserve. This coast-line and these islands experienced alien contact much earlier than did the inland boundaries, along the Roper River and the "Buffalo" plains. The actual interior of the Reserve, except for the bush country towards the Rose River in the south-east, the Arafura and Milin- 121 [177]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

carried out locally and under close control, so that the "grass burn" season conducted by each horde, or hunting group, is prolonged sufficiently to yield its full food potential over a period of weeks or months, without waste.

By the time the burning of the grass has been completed, another phase in the cycle is reached. The group may now follow the watercourses, which are gradually drying up, and employ the special fishing methods which tradition (backed by a long period of trial and error) has established, as being appropriate to the area and to the season. They secure fish, freshwater tortoises and snakes, by swimming "drives" and by the use of dams, weirs, traps, nets, and special poisons containing chiefly *rotenone, saponin* and *tephrosin,* which, as the volume of water becomes restricted, can now be used effectively to stupefy the fish. One of the most effective of the fish poisons used by these people is *moiyoŋo* (*Tephrosia leptoclada*)* a leguminous plant with a root shaped like a small parsnip. This plant, of which specimens were examined at Rothamstead Experimental Station (Herts. England) was found to be highly toxic in solutions of 1%. Later again, the groups which have been hunting independently during the early south-east season, will converge on the few deep permanent lagoons, where the camps increase in size as they are augmented by other groups of people who have been similarly engaged in nomadic hunting.

At this time the chief food of the natives inland will be *ŋätu*, the fruit of the Cycad Palm (*Cycas media*), which in this area yields very large quantities of food. In coastal

*A second species of *Tephrosia* hitherto undescribed, also called *moiyoŋo*, collected during the expeditions in Arnhem Land on which this work was carried out, has since been named *T. Arnhemia* by Mr. C. T. White (Government Botanist, Queensland).

137 zones, *rakai*, the corms of the Tall Spike Rush (*Heleocharis*
262 *sphacelata*), to which reference has already been made, form the staple food. At the same time, communal fishing
226 drives—almost the only large scale hunting activity in which
476 men and women work together—are organised. Most other communal enterprises, except those of a ceremonial nature, are carried out by groups of men or of women working
[687] independently. In most cases the actual procedure follows
[554] so closely a traditional pattern that little actual leadership
[602] is required and this is generally accepted as the responsibility of the most senior and experienced of the older men who stand in the correct kinship status to the group in whose territory the hunting "drive" is carried out. Because these methods are traditional and are therefore regarded as a recapitulation of a pattern laid down by the ancestral culture heroes, the leadership is nominal and generally unobtrusive.

592 Each family—the group consisting of a man and his wife or wives and their young children—lives as a separate unit within the camp. It generally makes its own hut, shelter or breakwind according to the season, but the essential thing is that its life is centred around its own fireside, and that each family group cooks its own food, and lives as an independent and self-contained group within the horde. As a rule only one regular meal is eaten in camp. This is at night after the people have returned from the day's hunting.

591 There is no single women's camp, and up to the time of
593 marriage a girl remains with her parents and shares with
883 her mother the work of gathering vegetable food, and of food preparation, the making of bark houses and the getting of wood and water. But in the case of a boy, after commencement of his first initiation rites, at about the age of puberty, he leaves the fireside of his parents and goes to LIVE IN THE SINGLE MEN'S CAMP.

live in the single men's camp. The brother-sister tabu, which is very strict, now comes into operation, and his sisters as well as his mother are prohibited from eating any of the game that he kills and which is now known by a special term, *kälŋboi*. But he still receives vegetable food from his mother and from certain other female relatives which he reciprocates with gifts of fish, honey or "sugar bag" and any other food the eating of which is not restricted by *kälŋboi* tabus. Later as he acquires status and the tabus upon the game he kills are removed or relaxed, he will make regular reciprocal gifts of animal food to his *ŋandi* and to the other female relatives upon whom, prior to his marriage, he was dependent for vegetable food.

The division of labour is well-marked. The chief task of the woman, besides the bearing of children, is the collection and preparation of vegetable food and of shellfish, as well as such small game as rats, bandicoots, opossums and *kuku*, "sugar bag", the honey of the small black native bee (*Trigona* spp.), as she may glean by the way. Each woman works for her own family group—her husband and children—but some of the food that she obtains may also be sent to relatives to whom she has obligations defined by kinship. Others again may be prohibited from partaking of this food because of their kinship or other status at certain stages of their own or the woman's relationship to the society. Most of the food obtained by a woman during menstruation is tabu to certain relatives—particularly to her brothers. Contrary to the general idea the main food supply among aborigines, except at certain restricted seasons of the year, is not animal, but vegetable, and in Arnhem Land upwards of sixty food plants are known. Some of these are local and are obtained more or less casually and in small quantity. But a comparatively small number, which

constitute staple foods, are gathered in great bulk, which can be measured in tons, and these plants provide as regular a harvest of food as cultivated gardens. In Eastern Arnhem Land the most important of the staple foods are *ŋätu*, the fruit of a Cycad, two or more species of yam, one, a long yam called *gulläkka* (*Dioscorea transversa*) and a round yam *djitama* (*D. sativa*, var. *rotunda* etc.) which possesses a poisonous property which must be leached out after cooking, *kinipirri* (a wild *Taro*), very local in distribution, and *dirrpo*, water lilies, (*Nymphaea*) of several species, of which both seeds and rootstocks are eaten. In the coastal area, by far the most important staple food from the time the salt plains dry after the wet until the onset of the rains at the end of the dry season, is *rakai*, the small round corm of the Tall Spike Rush, which grows in great quantities, covering hundreds of acres of ground on the coastal plains, especially in areas subject to periodic flooding with brackish water. The corm of this plant is about the size of a hazelnut, and when eaten raw, has much the same flavour. *Rakai* is also cooked, and is prepared by roasting in hot ashes, when it is hammered with a wooden mallet into the form of a small cake resembling nut-meal of coarse texture.

The fruit of the Cycad, *ŋätu*, which was mentioned above, must be soaked for a period of from three to five days to leach out soluble poison which it contains. After this it is ground, moulded into a cake which may weigh several pounds, wrapped in a neat parcel in paperbark, and cooked in hot ashes, when it bears a resemblance to a very heavy, coarse, unleavened bread. Vast quantities of *ŋätu* are gathered in the course of the year. It has the merit that, unlike most other foods of the aborigines which must be eaten immediately after preparation, it can be kept for some days or weeks. The fact that it is very abundant gives *ŋätu* a

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special value in native economy, for it enables the women to maintain an adequate food supply on ceremonial occasions when hundreds of people are gathered in one camp for weeks or months at a time, who could not otherwise be supported for such periods on local resources. *ŋätu* is also the principal food eaten in Arnhem Land on ritual occasions. After it has been received by the old men it is then dedicated ceremonially to the *räŋga*, the sacred totemic object, by the *Dälkärrämirri*, who recites aloud over it the "big" or sacred names of the totem. It now becomes sacramental food and may not be eaten or even handled by the profane, that is, by any but men fully initiated to the particular totem to which it has been dedicated.

Although, as was stated above, *ŋätu* can be kept, after preparation, for several days, the natives of Arnhem Land, in common with other Australian aborigines, do not store food, but are dependent for their subsistence on the result of each day's hunting. In Arnhem Land a single species of fruit, *mundjutj*, (*Buchanania Muelleri*), which is harvested in great quantity in the wet season, chiefly January and February, is sometimes spread out in the sun to dry until it becomes wrinkled and shrivelled like a prune. It is then distinguished by a separate name, *bindjitj*, from the fresh fruit, *mundjutj*. The method of preparation is as follows: After a preliminary exposure to the sun the fruit is rubbed with red ochre and again dried until it is hard and brittle, after which it is wrapped up neatly in parcels of teatree bark. In this form *bindjitj* may be stored for weeks or even months—a practice almost unprecedented among these nomadic hunting people. The subsequent preparation of *bindjitj* is carried out by pulverising the dried fruit, including the hard seed, with pounding-stones, wetting both fruit

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down the back when empty, but when full the weight is usually borne on the forehead, or if the load is a heavy one, the baskets are carried on top of the head.

At first glance, Arnhem Land, like many other parts of Northern Australia, may appear to be barren and inhospitable and to offer little promise for the gathering of vegetable foods. But it must be remembered that over the centuries the aborigines have accumulated great experience of the food plants of their environment, which is handed on from generation to generation, and that they have developed highly specialised methods for exploiting every resource of the territory in which they live. The food resources of Arnhem Land are rich and varied and the natives have developed effective processes for the preparation of its vegetable foods, as well as many clever and ingenious devices for the capture of fish and game.

Again the cooking and preparation of food is far from the crude or haphazard business of popular imagination. *nätu* is not the only poisonous plant which is used as food. A number of other food plants also contain soluble poisons which are eliminated by simple and effective, but often prolonged, cooking and washing.

The women are dexterous and neat in all their technological processes, and to watch them at work in the preparation of vegetable food is an object lesson in the skilful and efficient use of the simplest equipment.

The task of the men is to provide animal food, both fish and game. As a rule, when a large quarry such as a kangaroo is killed, it is cooked and quartered on the spot, and is then divided equally among those taking part in the hunt. It is taken back to camp in a cooked or half-cooked state, often wrapped neatly in paperbark. Each man again divides his share of the game according to his obligations defined by

224 kinship, with due regard to certain ritual observances, such
● 262 as restrictions and tabus. The game may then be warmed
602 on the hot embers, and shared out among those members of the family who are permitted to eat it, that is, among those whose status in relation to the social group, in initiation, or to the man who killed the kangaroo, does not place him or
[778] her under a tabu. The flesh of any kangaroo or other game which is killed with a spear or other weapon which is *yarkomirri* (lit. "having a name") that is, which has been dedicated to a sacred clan totem, is also sacred, and may be eaten only by members of the restricted group comprising the fully initiated members of the clan. On these occasions
[887 when the food or game is tabu, the division of the quarry
616] is in the hands of the old men of the clan, or more particularly, the men who apply the term *ŋandi* (mother)—reciprocal term *wäkku*—to the clan concerned, to whom it is *yindipulo*. The traditional rights of these men take precedence even over those of the hunters who killed the quarry. The men who officiate in these divisions of food or game, as on most ceremonial occasions, are by kinship status necessarily members of the opposite moiety.

431 In addition to hunting, and to the elaborate and exacting
462 ceremonial life in which every man plays a part, and which occupies much of his time, he must make and maintain his own spears, spear-throwers and fighting weapons. It will be seen later, that a man may actually acquire some of his spears and other weapons as gifts by ceremonial exchange. But as he also incurs an obligation to send spears
[461] to others within this system, such gifts do not actually relieve him either of the work or the responsibility of spear-making, but rather give him an incentive, an urge, to work and to devote the necessary time to the manufacture of fine weapons in order to maintain his prestige within the
CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE SYSTEM.

182 least equal, or if possible greater value, in order to maintain
431 his social status and to enhance his prestige. He achieves
461 this by his capacity to reciprocate a gift quickly and gener-
554 ously. If he failed to meet the obligations imposed, for
626 example by the kinship pattern, he would lose face, prestige, in his group. It will be evident that this feeling of shame and humiliation at failure to reciprocate a gift or to honour an obligation, apart altogether from any danger of incurring resentment and visitation by evil magic, furnishes one of the most powerful mechanisms which underlie the production of food and goods, and the circulation of these. This is well shown by an example given to me by my informants, which illustrates the use which can be made of this fact
262 to gain a desired objective. While a boy is still regarded as
562 a child, there is no tabu even for his sisters upon eating the
784 food that he may capture. But immediately after the circumcision ceremony, when his social status is altered and he lives apart from his mother and father in the single men's camp, the food collected or killed by a boy becomes tabu to relations of certain orders, and is now known by a special name, *kälŋboi* (*vide* page 21).

262 The eating of all *kälŋboi* food is surrounded by tabus,
431 even for those relatives who are permitted to partake of it at
784 all. For "outside" or "distant" relatives under the kinship sys-
606 tem to eat this *kälŋboi* food is a special privilege, but the
584 obligation to make ceremonial return payments, again of the type called *tadoit*, is always present. *Kälŋboi* food may sometimes be used to ingratiate a young man with a woman who stands in the relationship of potential mother-in-law (*mukul rumaro*) to him, but whose daughter has already been promised (*wawun*) to another man some distance away. At first the *mukul rumaro* may refuse the *kälŋboi* food, but under coercion she may at length accept it, and

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if she does so, is regarded as having compromised herself into giving her daughter to the youth whose *kälŋboi* food she has eaten, although she knows that a fight must follow when the man to whom the girl rightfully belongs learns what has happened. Having accepted the *kälŋboi* food the woman also makes a ceremonial presentation of food which she gives to her *korroŋ* (son-in-law), who however does not eat it himself but distributes it to certain other relatives, defined by custom.

This example will show the strength of the urge to reciprocate, to discharge an obligation, and the extent to which it dominates the behaviour of these people, as well as its importance as a driving force in social and in economic activities, in which it furnishes one of the most important incentives to work.

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114 introduction to this fundamental aspect of aboriginal life is given in A. P. Elkin's *The Australian Aborigines: How to Understand Them.*

771 779 Totemism is fundamentally a complex of beliefs and attitudes based on a doctrine of oneness of life shared by nature and man. In other words, natural species and phenomena are brought into man's social order; that is, they are regarded as members of his local groups, clans, and moieties. Usually, too, a bond that is both social and religious is established between a group of men and women on the one hand and one or more natural species on the other. The latter are the totems of the former. In what is termed cult-society (or 'lodge') totemism, the totem is the symbol of the whole set of myth and ritual, which is the clan's link with, and door into, the 'eternal dream-time', the state and life of the great heroes, the ancestors, the spirits.

796 Mr Chaseling refers to many rites and beliefs which belong to the aboriginal religious world. Those connected with blood, described in Chapter 5, are especially interesting. We notice the taboo on eating food, because of the shedding [x2] of blood when obtaining it, or because of the presence of a corpse, and the rite for removing the taboo, which includes a 'totemic well', a sacred meal, and purification by fire. Another interesting rite is the singing of the myth of creation by the medicine-man as a cure (Chapter 10).

842 In Chapter 8, Mr Chaseling refers to the natives' belief regarding conception. The general reader may not be aware that in most regions of the continent, the Aborigines do not regard sexual intercourse as the cause of conception. Mr Chaseling says that was the case in north-east Arnhem Land, but that now, the view has been slightly modified; it is now held that intercourse is an act of preparation for, and an invitation to, the unborn spirit to enter the womb. This agrees with the findings of Spencer and Gillen and others for nearby regions. Dr Warner, however, came to the

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000 visitors are a few wandering nomads who barter shells and curios. It seemed a lonely and depressing outpost, but the keepers created their own interests, and one of them showed me his workshop where he cured and stuffed small turtles, working on the shell with emery and plate powder till it took on a brilliant polish of rare beauty.

It was late in the afternoon and we were forty miles east of Cape Don. A well-known missionary from Arnhem Land, the Rev. Theodor Webb of Milingimbi, was with us, and he assured us that the monotony of the low-lying coastline would be broken that night at Sandy Island. It is well named, for it is no more than a pile of sand a few feet above sea level. In their anxiety to go ashore, the Yulengor crew swam rather than wait for the dinghy, and we soon saw the reason for their impatience, as thousands of terns rose screeching from the sand where it was impossible to walk without breaking their eggs. They were about the size of domestic hens' eggs, in pastel shades of blue, green, or biscuit with small blotches of sepia, purple, brown, or grey. A few had hatched, and the fledglings ran blunderingly into the grass and sea. Our crew filled their petrol tins, boxes, and bags, and carried them to their quarters in the fo'c'sle;
[262] for as far as the nomad is concerned, fresh or over-ripe tern eggs are equally appetizing, but pride of place is given to those on the point of hatching.

1997 Three days out from Darwin, we dropped anchor at Goulburn Island and landed on the short sandy beach. Tall, heavily laden coconut-palms fringed this beach, and an avenue of wide-spreading mango trees led to a small grove of citrus and frangipani by the old mission house. The buildings were not pretentious, and had been built from corrugated iron and split-cane, with cement floors. Pioneer missionaries landed on the island in 1916 and hacked their way through mangrove jungle and scrub, and erected bark shelters for stores, tools, and medicines; the diarist

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running away, and two youths chased him into the jungle. One of them threw a spear which cut off his ear, and a second went through him. The avengers shouted to the horde, and one by one the men plunged their spears into the body and left it there, exposed and deliberately mutilated.

It was after midnight when the men finished this story of stark Stone Age justice, and I left them on the beach to return to the lugger to switch on a portable radio for an assurance that this was actually the twentieth century.

The rest of the trip was boisterous, with head winds and heavy seas, till we entered Port Bradshaw and beached the boat for repairs. Long ago, Macassar traders fished here for trepang, and East Indian tamarind trees fringing the shoreline marked their camps. I came across a curious formation of stones, and could make nothing of it till months later I read in Matthew Flinders's diary that in 1803 he saw similar formations in Blue Mud Bay. He could not solve the riddle till he met the Macassars in the English Company's Islands, where Pobasso, their chief, told him that the Malays had made the stone fireplaces to boil and cure their bêche-de-mer.

Bêche-de-mer is known locally by its Macassar name of trepang. Scientifically it is termed *Echinodermata* or 'Spiny-skinned'; seven hundred species are known to exist, and the few varieties in Australia range from nine to eighteen inches in length. They are rough skinned and look like lumps of rubber or bread rolls, with ridged bands extending around the entire length. Trepanging is the oldest industry in Australia, for it seems to have been at its height soon after Captain Cook landed at Botany Bay. Malay traders gathered it for the Chinese market. It must be cured for export, and the process is much the same as that used by the Malays. It is gutted, boiled in a strong solution of mangrove bark and sea-water, smoked over a slow fire, dried in the sun, and bagged. Chinese regard it as a delicacy and

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177 262 appreciate it, particularly during their New Year festivals, but nomads will not eat the product, and their half-starved dingoes turn from it.

648 At Caledon Bay we walked over the scene of the then recent Japanese massacre. In 1933 the Asiatics came to fish for bêche-de-mer, and nomads told me that they landed near the aboriginal camp and went from one family to another offering handfuls of tobacco in return for women. Tobacco makes an almost irresistible appeal to nomads, but they surlily refused to trade, though the tobacco so tantalizingly near made them moody and irritable. Trouble was still brewing some days later, when the Japanese established their camp and employed nomads to collect firewood for the trepang fires. It is said that an Asiatic threw a piece of damper at a Yulengor for refusing to work, and thereby brought the trouble to a head; for even if they are desperately poor, nomads are extremely sensitive to a slight. Their spears were hidden in the sand, and they speared the Japanese so that only one escaped by diving into the sea and swimming to a nearby headland. Spears punctured the surface as he swam underwater, but he out-witted his pursuers by ingeniously breaking the head off a spear and clasping it under his arm as he fled into the bush. His ruse worked, and pursuing Yulengor said: 'Leave him, he has the spear through him and will soon be dead.' Days later, he arrived at Milingimbi, two hundred miles away, lacerated, exhausted and naked, and missionaries later took him to Darwin. He took the first boat to Japan.

797 No suitable site for a station could be found in Caledon Bay, so we returned to Yirrkala near Cape Arnhem. It had an exposed anchorage and poor soil, but it also had fresh [133] water, an elevated building-site and clean beaches. We decided to establish the station there.

By the middle of November, timber had been cut and

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ground and cultivating and planting crops. Payment in the form of flour and tobacco was made for all work done, and the principle of 'no work—no pay' was strictly adhered to. Agriculture was an economic necessity in assisting them to develop from a nomadic existence to a communal life. Pay was later in the form of food grown on the station; in this way they became self-supporting, and profits were automatically returned to them.

When the time came for planting it seemed ridiculous to the nomad to bury good sweet-potatoes instead of eating them, for the relationship between seed and harvest had not occurred to them. About three months later, when the first crops were still immature I was surprised one morning to find that they had been scratched out and eaten. Two months of hard clearing and three months of cultivating had gone overnight. Disappointing as it was, the people could hardly be blamed, for it was against all their experience to leave good food to mature. For centuries, stray coconuts had drifted from the East Indies to the shores of Arnhem Land, but none took root, for this unexpected harvest from the sea was eagerly seized and eaten. Nomads consume all edible food at hand, and in bush life rarely wait for yams, fruit, and berries to ripen. Food is scarce, and they instinctively make the most of anything they find. I have seen them bring loads of popular cashew nuts into camp, stripping the trees and smashing their wide shady branches in an effort to get the last of the crop, and then gorge the nuts through day and night till all have been eaten. On rare occasions a number of turtle are caught, and though some could be kept alive and eaten later, they are killed at once, and the camp feasts and sleeps intermittently till the catch is finished.

We tried to explain that cows and goats were kept for their milk and not for meat, but nomads found it hard to sit and tend them day by day and yard them at night, when each

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CHAPTER FIVE

Jungle Lore and Etiquette

Our front door overlooked an alluring crystal-clear stream where it joined the sea. When I asked what the name of the Yirrkala camp meant, I was told: 'Oh, that is the water where the camp is made.' This beach by the sea was a favoured camping-ground and scores of Yulengor drank from the stream. A white man drinks from a bush stream by cupping his hands, or by blowing away the dust on the surface and putting his lips to the water; but Yulengor flip the water into their mouths. Out in the bush, when we were hot and thirsty, we came to a small soak in the hills, whereupon most of the men wandered off for strips of paper-bark or large green leaves from which they drank after deftly twisting them into drinking cups. Scores of these saccules lay around the soak, where they had been used at other times.

Apt terms describe methods of drinking. 'Wiaktun' is used of the baling of a canoe, which is accomplished by throwing the water out in a shell or the cupped hands; and the same word is applied to tossing water into the mouth. 'Dthurara-luptun' is a word-picture of drinking with the lips in the stream, for 'dthurara' is a doorway, river-entrance, or human mouth, and 'luptun' is the present tense of the verb 'to wash'.

In spite of the constant use of spears and the skill necessary in handling them, accidents do occur. Marjirry, a lad of about sixteen, one day left the station for a day's hunting. He stalked a kangaroo and speared it, but missed all the

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vital organs, and it made off into the scrub. He followed the wounded animal, and in the ensuing scuffle was himself seriously wounded, and had his thigh laid open by the protruding spearhead. However, he killed the animal and cooked some of it to take back to camp, and propped the rest in the branches of a tree. When he came limping into camp, his friends saw the blood and asked what had happened. Some of them went off to get the meat, but his closest relatives said with characteristic and genuine feeling: 'We will not eat that meat; it has Marjirry's blood on it.' It was clearly a case of 'mumbakuta' and the spilt blood had to be ceremonially washed away and his body purified by washing in a totemic well. Marjirry's father began the ceremony by declaring: 'No one is to eat that meat except my son's wife and children; it is mumbakuta.' He scooped a hole in the sand resembling his horde's totemic well, and when the rest of the kangaroo arrived, the closest relatives ate it, carefully buried the bones and skin in the 'well', and lit a fire over it so that the camp-dingoes could not desecrate them.

By the end of the next week Marjirry felt better, so his father told him that he must 'wash' and that he would make him 'koota-koota', or ceremonially clean, in their totemic well. Everyone sat by the 'well' containing the buried bones and skin. After some singing and dancing, Marjirry stood over the well whilst the leader 'sang' the horde's thanks to the spirit-Ancestors for restoring him to health. Sand was poured over him, and he washed imaginary blood off his body and smeared himself with red ochre. However, before the affair could be considered finished with, Marjirry again went hunting and brought his first kill to his father, who announced that everyone could eat it, and in the ensuing meal thanked them for having observed the tabu. To break this tabu and eat the victim's food, or use his utensils, is a breach of etiquette and a violation of sacred and personal

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752 262 234 [053] honour; sickness overtakes the offender, or the father may spear him.

778 784 411 224 [431] [531] New spears, knives, axes, and canoes are sometimes pronounced sacred and thereby impregnated by tabu. Custom provides for the use of such articles in inter-tribal presentations, and any responsible man may prepare them and paint his horde's totem on them. Nanyan, a youth of the Gerrkee horde, spent most of his time at Yirrkala, and I watched him make a spear and 'declare' it sacred. But the tabu could not be completed till he had killed with it, and when he speared a kangaroo it automatically became tabu to all but the men of his horde. After the meat had been eaten the oldest man present completed the ceremony by painting totemic symbols on it for Nanyan. He prized his spear and used it for a time in hunting; and because it had [531] been ceremonially 'painted', the tabu was under control, and women and children of his own horde were allowed to [562] eat meat killed with it, though on no account could the kill be shared with females from other hordes.

[431] Nanyan later presented his spear to a man of the Kumite horde who had no totemic or marriage link with the Gerrkee. This 'alien' appreciated the courtesy and used the spear freely in the hunt, but only the initiated men could eat the [562] food, the women and children not being allowed to share in the kill, because their horde had no associations with the spear's totemic centre. Finally the spear was formally returned to Nanyan who put it to normal use in procuring food for himself and family.

784 126 562 On patrol I visited a horde camped among the casuarinas near Caledon Bay, and in the evening saw the men return with a canoe loaded with fish. During the unloading I noticed that the women and children deliberately kept away and ignored the splendid haul, and I was told that the canoe

775 hundred miles away, and it was thought that two Yirrkala
763 men had been killed. The men who were with me immediately supported the tidings with the evidence of the fires in the bush, that had obviously been lit by the mali of the dead men, who had travelled the hundred miles to inform their friends.

775 Unexpected and distant smoke is at times considered to come from mali camp-fires. Without consciously contradicting the statement that mali are spirits, Yulengor complacently attribute unrecognizable footprints and other physical functions to them. An unknown canoe carried in on the tide or found on an island is accepted as having been used by mali when hunting or fishing.

562 Women have been assigned a very inferior place in aborig-
881 inal society, and it almost seems that they attend some ceremonies to focus attention on the men. But at least one ceremony is carried out entirely by women, at the coming of a first menstrual period.

A young wife, on recognizing the menarche, informs her mother, who then forbids her to leave her windbreak. Food and water are brought to her, and most likely she will
[285] curl up in her 'nganmurra', or cone-shaped mat, till she
[302] recovers. She is painted with two bands of clay below the shoulders, and red, yellow, and white vertical lines are made between these bands. Whenever menstruation recurs,
362 women smear themselves with ochre and painstakingly
841 abstain from eating men's food. Dugong, turtle, fish, and
[302] birds are regarded as men's food, and men are expected to
[962] spear them; women content themselves with collecting yams, roots, and shellfish. With undisguised chagrin, a wife in this temporary quarantine will sit with her husband and his wives round the camp-fire, painted red and with her back turned, and will nibble a yam or shellfish whilst the family consume turtle, kangaroo, or fish.

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JUNGLE LORE AND ETIQUETTE

If a woman secretly hunted for men's food at such a time, she would bring trouble on herself and relatives, and the species of game she killed would become scarce; when the men caught nothing they would say: 'Some woman must have eaten food here', and within a few hours every woman in the locality would be expected to produce an alibi. The life of her husband would be in jeopardy and sooner or later misfortune would overtake him. In offering condolence to an injured man, sympathizers will observe that, as there seems to be no apparent cause for his misfortune, his wives have probably violated this food law.

In bush camps men have a lot of time on their hands, and if a man strolls into a friend's camp he can be sure of a welcome and a remarkable display of polite consideration. If the host has been fishing, he will share the food with his visitor, totally ignoring women and children in his camp. He will remark that there are more fish if his visitor would care to stay and share them, or, if he shows signs of leaving, the largest and best will be pressed on him and the host may even give him a spear or spear-thrower as well. When I asked why such ostentatious gifts were made, I was assured that it was customary, and that the man sitting alone in his camp, except for his wives and children, is inordinately pleased when a friend visits him, and the gifts help to express his goodwill and friendliness.

On the other hand, aboriginal farewells are never prolonged. At the conclusion of a visit, or when leaving the home camp for an extended period, the men continue their discussions till the women, children, and dogs have started out. Men then terminate their visit by nonchalantly remarking: 'I'm finished; I'm going.' Nothing more is said on either side, and they leave.

'My word, Naratjin, you have a fine boy there. He has

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touch it, or for his brothers to do so either. The night was hideous with their quarrelling, and though the brothers attacked the old man with their spear-throwers, he loudly proclaimed the tabu and the youths dared not eat the meat.

Sexual intercourse is accepted as a natural function, not to be affected by proximity to the family circle or to other families camped a few feet away, nor yet by occasional unseemly interest from the young men's camp. Even in east Arnhem Land, where a strict morality is outwardly enforced, intercourse is little less than promiscuous, and it is not to be wondered at that most youths laughingly admit their *affairs d'amours*, and that women frequently make the initial advance—though secretly for fear of their husbands.

To prevent irregularities, married men enforce a number of prohibitions, and unmarried and unattached men are segregated in a camp by themselves at a reasonable distance from any family. A woman is not allowed to eat food presented to her husband by a youth, in case he should consider her to be under an obligation to him, and if a youth wishes to share his food with a married brother, he must not go to his camp but must call him over and give it to him.

In many relationships it is unlawful for a man and woman to greet each other, and when I have asked for a name, I have often been greeted by evasion or silence, simply because no one present was allowed to utter the name. Brothers and sisters may not look at each other when speaking, but talk with averted faces. A man converses freely with his wife, mother, daughter, granddaughter, and niece; but when speaking to other relatives he averts his face, and not being able to call them by name he draws their attention by an ejaculation or by saying: 'I wish to

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CHAPTER SIX

From Hand to Mouth

22 Aborigines have lived from hand to mouth for centuries, but it is a wonder that any human being can live in Arnhem Land and find enough to eat. Though the Reserve covers 34,000 square miles, an average white man would perish in it if he were not rescued by a Stone Age man. On the other hand an aboriginal family, isolated many miles from its hunting-grounds, can calmly grind hardwood into hunting spears and digging-sticks, make fire by twirling one stick against another, find water, erect a shelter to suit the weather conditions, and make a comfortable camp.

22 732 Iniji, an aboriginal boy of eleven years, was inadvertently abandoned on a barren island near Yirrkala when his horde divided forces and went away in their canoes. Iniji was deformed and had difficulty in hobbling, yet he kept himself alive for over a month by crawling along the beach for turtle eggs and shellfish. For moisture he manipulated [312] long grass straws far under a low cliff face and sucked the only fresh water on the island.

•262 Contrary to popular belief, aboriginal foods are mainly of vegetable origin, although they also eat animals, birds, fish, and reptiles. For countless centuries, Stone Age hunters have tested roots, yams, berries, animals, birds, fish, reptiles, and shellfish, and numerous deaths have resulted from poisoning, yet they have perfected methods of treatment. [147] They have also evolved an astonishingly efficient digestive system, and also jaws and teeth that bend wire and small iron bars into spears, and nails into fish-hooks.

Most of the forty varieties of yams found in the Reserve

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are either fibrous, tasteless, or poisonous, and sometimes they are all three. Three or four varieties are palatable if eaten raw, but become hard and indigestible when cooked. Ingenious methods are used to prepare poisonous yams, which are roasted or steamed before being shredded or pounded into a sticky dough. In one camp I saw women going to endless bother to cook these yams, and imagined that they must be a delicacy, but an old man said they were called 'tchikkyugga'. 'Tchikky' (cheeky, in pidgin English) is used for anything hostile or dangerous, and some beachcomber had probably called this yam a cheeky ——, and his description has remained.

'Bareela' (*Dioscorea Sativa var*) is a dangerously poisonous yam resembling a light-skinned English potato, and it is cooked on hot stones covered with sheets of bark and sand. It is steamed thus for an hour or more before being thrown with certain leaves into a shallow trench which is covered with bark and sand over which a fire is kept alight for between fifteen and eighteen hours. Finally the yams are removed and prepared for consumption by being pounded into a glutinous mass like gritty plasticine.

'Jittama' is also a poisonous variety and is shredded on the sharp edges of a snail shell so that the pulp can be packed into a network dilly-bag and soaked in a waterhole. The pulp ferments quickly and must be eaten in the early morning, for if it is kept in the heat or, as the Yulengor say, 'till the sun is over our heads', the children suffer from sick headaches.

In many low-lying areas, hundreds of acres of swamp are covered with ferns, or 'karkor'. These black fibrous roots, similar to bracken roots, are roasted, drawn through the mouth, and chewed to extract the gluey starch. A regular camp of a hundred or more nomads was made each year near such swamps at Cape Arnhem and they lived almost entirely on this unappetizing fibrous root.

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262 [133] [222] [252] Lagoons overflow in the wet season and hundreds of acres of low-lying land are under water. It is country where water-lilies grow in profusion. Women dive for the root-stocks and roast great quantities of them. Lily seed-pods are eaten raw, sieved through network dilly-bags, or ground between stones and baked into cakes.

[137] [222] The most palatable of all vegetable food is probably the corm or swamp rush, 'rarkai', and these swamps are famous throughout Arnhem Land. Rarkai rushes cover brackish swamps near the coast, and women systematically turn over many acres of black mud in their search for the nut. In east Arnhem Land I know of several such swamps, each of which [361] [796] supported a hundred or even two hundred Yulengor for six weeks at a time. During the corm season the hordes make the swamps a rendezvous for corroborees, ceremonies, and initia-[574] tions. Corms are about the size of marbles, and in addition to being the most nutritious of all their vegetable foods they possess a pleasant nutty flavour.

[171] Several foods have totemic significance and find a place in ceremonial practices. Probably the most important of these is 'ngutu', the nut of the cycad palm, and it is said that this yellowish brown nut was first eaten by spirit-Ancestors [773] who instructed their daughters in the art of preparing it. [462] Legend declares that as the knowledge was received first by [222] women, they have for all time to attend to the gathering and cooking of all vegetable foods.

262 252 Hard-shelled cycad nuts are cracked between stones, and the kernels soaked in water for three or even five days. Most of the poison is thus leached out, and the pulp is wrapped in bark and buried in hot sand over which a fire is lit. Cycad meal can be baked into flat coarse cakes that sometimes weigh up to fifteen pounds, that keep for days, and can be [574] carried long distances for use at ceremonial gatherings. 'Ngutu' has sustaining properties, and Yulengor live on it for weeks as they prepare for inter-tribal corroborees.

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Old men sometimes demand a further treatment of the food, and the partly cooked damper is then kneaded into a wide, thin layer and rolled into bark before being re-baked. By this final process the 'ngutu' becomes impregnated by tabu, and only fully initiated males may eat it. I have seen men delirious in the cycad season; though not showing other ill effects, they do not recover for several weeks. Kuninyal suffered in this way, and I remember he was the sport of the camp and became thin and haggard through not being able to hunt for himself. It was openly stated that he had been eating half-cooked cycad cakes.

Many nuts, berries, and fruits are found in the bush, but they are not very enticing. Some are as large as cherries, but the majority are the size of currants. Wild cashew nuts, ripening at the end of the dry season, are the most favoured of all. Small bright red and orange cashew fruit are attached to kidney-shaped brown nuts which are full of prussic acid. A thick skin on the nut also contains acid, and it is roasted to extract the kernel, which tastes like a tiny potato with a peanut flavour. In the roasting process, acid spurts from the fire, and fumes in the smoke severely burn anyone near by. Children develop scaly blisters, and women tending the cooking fires receive extensive burns.

'Larrani' trees, with their grey branches and large green waxy leaves, make a gay sight when they are loaded with bunches of ripe red fruit. The fruit looks like red apples, but they have large woody kernels and very little flesh. Large quantities are gathered, and hunters use them to slake their thirst; but I must confess to finding that their astringency only increased my desire for water.

Another popular fruit comes from the beautiful East Indian tamarind tree, which thrives and bears prolifically around old Macassar watering-places. The seed pods are filled with a pleasant acidulous brown pulp which can be stored, but nomads strip the trees and eat the fruit long before it is ripe.

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•262 Variety in this otherwise uninteresting vegetable diet is provided by fish, birds, reptiles, and small animals. Women fossick in jungles for land-snails and large white wood-grubs, and when the tide is out they comb the mud flats and reefs for mangrove worms, shellfish, oysters, lobsters, and crabs.

231 Some women train dingoes to help in their ceaseless search for small animals, reptiles, birds, and eggs. A dingo pup, captured in the bush, henceforth shares the family shelter, travels in the canoe, and is fed and petted with the children. They are often called 'son' by the owner and referred to by the relationship term used for the owner or his child. When a favoured dog dies, it is buried and wept over in much the same way as a child. Women gash their heads and wail, one of the men conducts a mourning-song and dance, and I have seen them switch themselves with leafy twigs to drive off the canine ghost!

Dingoes breed freely with domesticated dogs, and most of the wild dogs in Arnhem Land now bear unmistakable traces of the white man's dog. However, the pure-bred dingo is by no means extinct, and there are many of these large, strong, good-looking brown dogs in Arnhem Land. When they are well fed (they seldom are), they grow to almost twice the size of a kelpie and are attractive in appearance, but they cannot bark. It seems certain that the dingo migrated with the first aborigines, and Dr F. Wood-Jones, an authority on the dingo, says: 'The dingo and the Stone Age dog of Europe are practically identical and both but little removed from the Palearctic wolf stock from which they sprang. Man and dog were both migrants.'

773 Several Yulengor legends referred to the creation of dingoes by aboriginal Ancestors. In one story, it was said that having already formed the nuclei of several hordes, the Ancestors came to the grassy plains south of Arnhem Bay, where they made a magpie, an opossum, and two dingoes. Summer showers drove the birds into a tree, where they

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104 rearranged. Consonants also could be revalued to provide for the common 'ng' and 'ny' at the beginning of many words, and for the frequent 'tch' we used 'tj'. Vagaries of
192 pronunciation occurred in unwritten and slurred words, such as 'nama' and 'ngama' (the verbs 'to see' and 'to hear'). For years I was confused by the almost indistinguishable differences (all vowels being short) between the verb 'ngurra' (I lie down), the noun 'ngurru' (a nose), the adjectival suffix 'nguru' (from), and the noun 'ngurra' (a 'fire'). 'Jukor' is a louse whilst any sort of fat is 'jukorr'. There seems to be no connexion between the terms, except
● [262] that the fat of any fish or game is considered a rare and
[515] tasty morsel, the sight of it exciting children as much as would a tin of lollies, and head-lice are small fat parasites which women and children gather from each other's heads and eat with obvious relish.

193 It has been said that aboriginal languages have a common root-stock, and that some features are common to them all. The indefinite article in language is missing in Arnhem Land,
[197] as it is elsewhere, but 'ka' is used in the north as the equivalent of the English conjunction 'and'. With one or two exceptions aboriginal adjectives follow the noun, not only in the north but throughout Australia. Some forms of the pronoun 'ngara' (I) or 'ngaraku' ('my' or 'mine') are found in all dialects from Cape York to Cape Leeuwin. In addition to singular and plural pronouns, there are also first, second, and third duals: 'I', 'you', and 'he' are there; 'ngali' refers to the two of us when both are present; 'nyilinyu' indicates two persons, of whom one is absent—for example, if a man said to me 'Who made that canoe?' and it belonged to an absent friend and me, I should reply 'nyilinyu' (the two of us 'made it'). 'Numa' is the form of 'you two' and 'munda' refers to 'those two'.

The language runs to inclusive and exclusive plurals in which 'napuru' refers exclusively to those of us in the

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out it is assumed to be worth while patching him up; his organs are pushed inside and the hot spear-thrower, bark-pulp, and clay-plaster treatment is applied.

Severe constipation, with distended stomach, is known as 'or wah', and for this the leaves of a dry jungle tree are mixed in water and the fluid rubbed over the body. Crushed leaves are inserted in the nostrils and piled on the chest whilst the remaining fluid is poured into the ears. It is said to be essential for the patient to remain supine, so as to allow the fluid to run from the nostrils and ears down through the spinal column into the stomach. A second method is to make a meal from a long, spiral shellfish (*Cerithieder Telescopium telescopium*) found on the mudflats. It is good food at any time, but it is also regarded as a cure for constipation, in aiding the passage of fibrous foods; it has the smoothness of the oyster and looks like glutinous slime.

A third treatment is carried out by building a low platform of sticks, covering it with swamp grass, placing the patient on top and covering him with sheets of paper-bark. A fire is made under the structure from the wood, leaves, and bark of the 'boit' or iron-wood tree. This particular tree is always used for the fire. (It is the hardest wood I have seen, and when it is being milled severe irritation is caused to both nose and throat.) The patient spends most of the day on the grille, and from time to time is turned over; at sundown he is removed and plunged into a nearby creek or waterhole. Most assuredly he can expect to feel stimulated.

Diarrhoea is not a common ailment, for natural wandering habits reduce the danger of infection. Nevertheless, epidemics do occur, maybe through over-eating a good catch of turtle, or through hunger driving the food-gatherers to eat decomposing fish or meat washed ashore. A succulent herb, 'brokpili', found near fresh water swamps, is then crushed and mixed with water, and the rusty red mixture

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Burial Rites and Cannibalism

DEATH and burial customs are much the same from one end of Arnhem Land to the other. Bodies are artistically painted and decorated before they are buried or exposed on platforms or in trees. Later the bones are collected and hoarded by relatives till they feel disposed to deposit them in decorated burial posts. In one district bones are removed from the body and parts of the flesh are eaten in an effort to form a link with the dead. This ceremonial cannibalism is confined to three or four hordes, but all Arnhem Land nomads attempt to communicate with their dead and call on them for assistance.

Mau's young son slipped from an overhanging tree, and in falling into the water struck his head on a canoe. No one saw the accident and he was not missed till his body drifted downstream to the beach. Two youths carried the corpse to the camp, but by coming into contact with it they had attracted its spirit or 'mali', which lodged in their skin. Before they dared to eat any food they must needs free themselves from the ghost by smearing red-ochre on their arms.

That night the entire camp of several inter-related hordes combined in a ceremony conducted by the child's grandfather. Alternately he wailed and sang a prayer to the spirit of his dead brother, the child's tribal grandfather, asking him to come and take the young spirit to the spirit world of 'Buralkor'. The camp set about preventing the spirit or mali from haunting them, and drove it from the camp by switching their bodies with heated leafy twigs.

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followed the sun till they stumbled on another lonely camp-fire. 773*

Just where all these old Men came from is something of a mystery, for the Junkgowa were fated to find several more of them. Yulengor merely say that 'they lived there and grew up like grass'. They were semi-human, like the Junkgowa, but with the difference that the Women had come from the spirit-world and the Men were of the earth.

Eight pairs of children were born at Yaure-Yaurngor, and like all Junkgowa children they were fully developed at birth and able to care for themselves. Mangrove worms were created here, and the Junkgowa waded out on the mud-flats to show their children how to eat them. Worms, the colour of the surrounding mud, and as long as an arm, are drawn from mangrove roots, and without mastication they are allowed to slip slowly down the throat till the heads can be bitten off and discarded. [825] [360]

In those days Women were the guardians of ceremonial secrets, and their male children led a vague, indolent existence. But when the Ancestresses began preparing for the first of the great inter-tribal ceremonies, their sons became jealous. Consequently, when the Women hung their totems on a tree and went off at low tide to gather shellfish, one of their eight sons said: 'Let us take all these totems and make the Women gather our food.' Unanimous approval greeted the suggestion, so they collected the totems and took them into the scrub. Now, the Junkgowa were aware of the insurrection while they were still on the mud-flats, because every shellfish they picked up opened its mouth and told them the news. On their return to camp, their daughters confirmed their fears but could not help them beyond showing them the men's tracks leading into the bush. Following the tracks, the Junkgowa came to a clearing where the men were singing, but as they hurried forward to recover the totems they were overcome by the 773* 779

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Two Women and a Serpent

Long after the creative Ancestresses disappeared into the west, two other vague heroines came from that direction. It is not known where they came from, except that their birthplace was in the darkness beyond the setting sun. They came to discover the land from which the sun rose and to explore this world of light.

By the time they reached Arnhem Land their journey had developed into a triumphal march from one sacred site to another. They finished the work of the Junkgowa by distributing arts and crafts and animals. They also made a new palm-leaf dilly-bag and manufactured the first stone axe-heads, as well as providing two or three quarries from which they are now chipped. Bush food was scarce before their time, and they distributed edible animals and made the popular 'sugar-bag' or native bees' nests. These minute stingless bees build small nests in hollow trees. Nomads cut an opening and scoop out a pint of wax and watery syrup mixed with chips and scores of bees. They eat the lot. Families camp in the hills for a week or more, and live on 'sugar-bag', with land-snails, goannas, and small animals to give some variety to this diet.

The Women came one day to a high circular hill covered by dense vegetation and inhabited by every known bird, reptile, yam, and fruit. It was an ideal camping-place and they stayed there for a long time eating their first raw meat and naming and distributing the animals and birds to the eight marriage-subsections or 'malk'. It will be recalled that every child is born into one of these eight malk and can

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shores of Arnhem Bay, the father of a strong horde, fearing no one. He was a mighty hunter and sometimes hunted far into the west. His family revered him and so vied for his favours that he was able to retire from the strenuous life of hunting. Jurrpan thought on many things as he sat in idleness by his fire. He knew that he had been wise in building up his horde till it was stronger than any other, he had the respect of all who knew him, yet he was far from satisfied. One night, restlessly waiting for the dawn, he saw the Morning Star rise over the hills to prepare the new day, and suddenly he knew what he wanted. He determined to leave the earth, climb into the western sky and there make his body glow like the Morning Star.

At that time the horde was camped by a lagoon, so Jurrpan disappeared when his sons and their wives were food-gathering. On their return at sundown they called and searched for the old man, but when they could not find his tracks leading away from the camp, they suspected that he had been spirited off by evil magic. One conjecture followed another, till they saw a brilliant star shining in the west, and from it heard the voice of Jurrpan calling them: 'I am camping up here now. I'm finished with the earth and shall stay here and make my body glow like Bunumbirr' (the Morning Star).

'But what will we do? Can't we come up there with you?'

On this point Jurrpan was adamant: 'No,' he said, 'I want you to change yourselves into a new food and live in the swamp near my old camp.'

Jurrpan's word had always been law, and now in spite of the confusion that spread through the camp no one thought of rebelling. They did as they were told and changed themselves into the well-known 'rarkai', or swamp rush-corm. Rarkai is a favourite food and spreads over great areas of swamp in the wet season, ripening after the water evaporates.

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SUN AND MORNING STAR

Late in the year women gather the corms, and at sunset they can see Jurrpan in the western sky shining down on his ripening swamp-children.

The Milky Way Galaxy is a wide river and was made by the creative Ancestresses before they came to the earth. Strong winds blow over it and whip up white-crested waves, thereby accounting for its peculiar diffused light. Two brothers once came to this Barduru River and planned to cross it. Wawa, the elder brother, said: 'We will need a strong canoe to carry us. Let us go back into the bush till we find a tree with a good sheet of bark.' Yuku Yuku, the younger brother, offered to cut the paddles; he felled a soft-wood tree and made them like those now used by nomads, except that they were extremely thin and pliable. Nevertheless they were effective and the canoe travelled rapidly.

By the time the brothers were half-way across the river the sun set and a wind swept down from the hills and lashed the waves till they filled the canoe. Jumping overboard, after the manner of modern Yulendor, the men tried to empty their canoe by rocking it from side to side, but wind and waves in the darkness compelled them to abandon it, and they struck out for the shore.

Yuku Yuku was wearing several tightly woven string armbands, and it is easy to imagine the inconvenience they caused him once they became wet and began to shrink. After a time he fell behind his brother, and as his arms stiffened, he gasped: 'I cannot keep afloat any longer.'

'Throw your armbands away.'

'I have tried, but they are too tight.'

And he sank.

Wawa did not hear the last remark, but when he looked back and failed to see his brother he returned to search for him. He swam about and called for a long time, yet not till he felt his own strength ebbing did he abandon the

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'No. We made three horde-territories. We don't want to walk; we want to fly, we want wings.' 773* 825

Yet another problem was raised by the Junkgowa: 'If you have wings and live like birds, what will you eat?'

But the Guwak were prepared for this: 'We will live on cashew fruit, seeing that no one else eats it.'

Finally the Junkgowa gave way and changed them into birds, and made it possible for them to eat the wild cashew fruit. Because the birds are reputed to have eaten this fruit prior to their present-day diet of insects and snails, Yulengor will not eat the birds. On calm nights the isolated cries of the Guwak can occasionally be heard, and it is said that they are singing as they fly amongst the stars. [262]

Some time after the Junkgowa began the work of creation, they were followed from the spirit world by two canoes loaded with birds and animals. Mythical beings, now known as 'Julpan', were in charge of the canoes, and they tried to follow the course taken by the Junkgowa to Port Bradshaw. But 'because they could not see the tracks left by the Junkgowa canoes in the water' they missed the course and sighted land thirty miles north of their objective. A high sea was running at the time, and they had little choice in selecting a good landing, so they tried to go ashore on the western side of Cape Arnhem, but both canoes were swamped in the surf. All the fish, dugong, turtle, and sea-snakes remained in the water; the animals and reptiles swam ashore, wandered wherever it pleased them, and set about propagating their species. Of the birds that flew ashore, some went into the hills and jungles, and others stayed on the coast, each according to its fancy, and there they are found today.

Having fulfilled their mission, the Julpan wondered what next they should do. One suggested leaving the earth: 'Let us go into the sky and camp among the stars,' he said. 773* 821

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

Stone Age Religion

IT IS OFTEN asked if aboriginals are religious and if there is an aboriginal religion. That 'man is a religious animal' and that he is 'incurably religious' are theories that have been widely accepted. Nevertheless it is surprising to discover the extent of aboriginal religious beliefs. Their beliefs are primitive, yet they include the early forms of most well-known religions, and cover to an astonishing degree much of the content in fundamental religion. Religion may be defined in many terms, but a score or more of these widely varying definitions cover the indefinite scope of aboriginal beliefs. Aboriginal religion is one of 'beginnings', and the sum total of his beliefs resolves itself into a deep well of proto-religion in which is found fetishism, tabu, magic, awe, fear, totemism, and prayer to departed human spirits.

Fetishism includes the belief that supernatural powers may be harnessed by wearing a charm of hair, skin, blood, or bone taken from the body of a dead man.[1] Wandering spirits are feared, the world is full of them and unexplained happenings are attributed to them.[2]

Tabus are carefully observed and ceremonial abstinence is dependent on the fear of definite consequences[3] whilst, because of its negative reaction, Stone Age men refrain from doing certain things for fear of the evil that will come upon them, as when women abstain from eating men's food and from hunting their game during menstruation.[4]

[1] Chapter 5, 'Jungle Lore and Etiquette.'
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Chapter 6, 'From Hand to Mouth.'
[4] Chapter 5, 'Jungle Lore and Etiquette.'